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*LIBRARY OF GENETIC SCIENCE AND  
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# THE MORAL LIFE

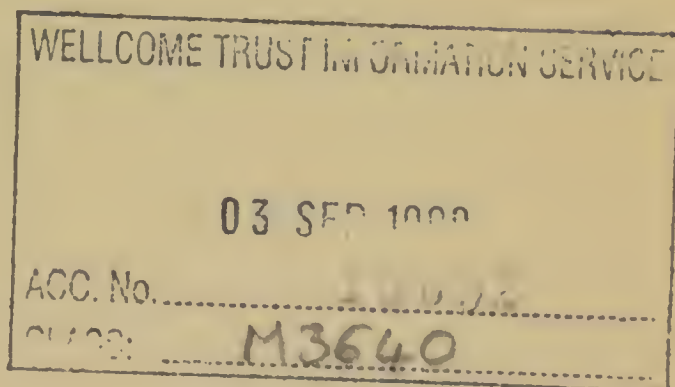
A STUDY IN

## GENETIC ETHICS

BY

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EDITORS' PREFACE.

The Editors of the *PSYCHOLOGICAL REVIEW* have long felt regret that they were not able to accept manuscripts which ran too long for the Monograph Series. They have instituted this 'Library,' therefore—with the restriction indicated in the title. The new 'genetic' movement, long represented by the Editor who signs this preface, is gathering momentum as the genetic method becomes more clearly defined, and its applications are worked out in science and philosophy. We hope the series may exert some influence toward its further extension; and to that end we invite contributions devoted to evolutionary and developmental topics, both scientific and philosophical.

*June, 1909.*

J. MARK BALDWIN.



TO MY MOTHER  
FROM WHOM I LEARNED THE PRACTICE  
OF  
THE MORAL LIFE  
THIS BOOK  
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED





## PREFACE.

“The moralist, like the savant,” writes M. Duprat, “must at the beginning of his investigations be ignorant of the point at which he will emerge.” In the spirit of the statement, I can best describe this book as an ‘inquiry.’ It embodies an attempt to determine, in the light of recent advances in psychological knowledge, what are some of the more important and fundamental characteristics of the moral life. It is not, however, a contribution to the phenomenology of ethics. Important additions have been made, in the past few years, to the literature of this subject, notably in the works of Westermarck, Hobhouse, and Wundt, and there seems now to be no danger that carefully collected and patiently sifted data will remain a *desideratum* of ethical science. It is, therefore, not my intention, even if I could claim the qualifications, to add to the number of books which deal with the morality of peoples at different levels of culture; but it has been my aim constantly to bear in mind what is to be learned in this field, and it is hoped that nothing has been set down in the following pages that cannot find confirmation in the labors of the experts in this line of research.

The relation of my work to sociology requires brief explanation. If we consider the tendencies among modern writers on sociology and ethics, sociology seems to be engaging itself more and more with ethical considerations, and ethics with equal diligence is cultivating social and sociological material. Thus a mutual *rapprochement* of sociology and ethics seems to be a sign of the times, and, in some quarters, the denial is already heard that the two can much longer remain separate and independent branches of

knowledge. If, further, we emphasize the dependence of ethics upon psychological method, a dependence which throughout its history has never been wanting, an additional motive is found for remarking upon the unstable character of the science of ethics, and the conclusion is sometimes drawn, as for example by Simmel, that nothing can prevent the dissolution of ethics as an independent science, and the handing over of its distinctive material and problems to sociology and psychology. In view of such facts as these, facts which point to the reconstructions which are taking place in sociology, psychology, and ethics, it is not surprising if the ethicist finds it necessary to define somewhat carefully his own particular problem, and to state the distinctions which mark it off from other related studies. This statement will explain the form which the discussion of the latter part of chapter II takes in this book—a discussion which is concerned with the *differentia* of ethics. And if any further explanation of my method in dealing with sociological questions is required, I can only say that I have felt it necessary to examine in some detail the concepts of a social sort which are presupposed in ethical science, and have had to refer at various points to the sociological treatment of these concepts in a critical way, because our knowledge of social facts is constantly undergoing enlargement, and because sociology must be understood to have reserved to the future its own systematic consideration of the implications of social phenomena.

I have referred to ethnology and sociology because in important respects they are, just now, the two most conspicuous sources from which, in varying degrees, assistance may be had for the carrying on of ethical inquiries. However, a broad and well-considered view of the moral life can be gained only when we refuse to be confined within the limits of these two disciplines. Some remarks on this question will be found in the earlier chapters: here all that is neces-

sary is to point out that the subject of this essay is not covered by either of these related sciences. Like each of them, genetic ethics is a determination of fact; and unlike both, the facts which it elucidates relate to the principles through which the moral life gets its organization, and by which it attains its development. I am not advancing a philosophy of morality: the humbler task has been attempted of dealing with the texture, or inner structure, of the moral life; and this, not as a theory, but as a fact which may be verified by the use of the appropriate methods. The methods are psychological. And if there is anything characteristic in the result, it is this: that the mental and the moral are seen to be inter-related and inseparable factors in the organization and growth of human societies, that moral soundness is based in mental development, and that mental integrity is impossible apart from moral growth. The doctrine is not new; in some respects it is as old as Greek thought. But the grounds on which the view is here seen to rest are modern. They have been made possible by the development of more accurate methods in psychology, and the specialization of problems in this field. The influence of these advances in psychology may be seen nowhere better, perhaps, than in the large place I have given to the discussion of the moral motive, a subject which is dismissed with a few paragraphs in most treatises, and, with the exception of Wundt's work on ethics, does not rise to the dignity of a chapter.

The topics selected for discussion have been chosen on a definite plan. It is true that much that may be considered ethical finds no place in these pages. If any one should be disappointed on this account, I can only say that I cannot share with him that view of ethics which makes of it a single and well-defined field of inquiry which every writer is obliged to cover. It is, in my judgment, no more possible for ethics to be compassed by a single writer and from a single point of view, than it is possible to do the same, for example,



in respect to chemistry or psychology. The breaking up of the subject-matter of ethics, and the specialization of method place a limitation on every ethical writer, and he must choose as his problem what seems at the time most in need of systematic investigation. His major problem will determine the particular topics of study. In brief, then, and as concerns the present work, I have omitted whatever does not bear directly upon a better understanding of the moral ideal—a conception which, I hold, is fundamental to every moral situation, and without which no rationalization of the moral life would seem to be possible.

In writing this book I have entertained the hope that I might be meeting the need not only of that increasing number who, amid the shifting standards of the time, are trying to find guidance as to present duty through a more intimate acquaintance with the principles of the moral life; but I have also tried to provide a book which, in the ground it covers and the method it adopts, might prove of service to those who, in our colleges and universities, are giving instruction in the subject of ethics. It does not, however, make unnecessary, on the part of the student, an acquaintance with the great historic writers in the field of ethics. That it can be used as a means of opening up the literature admits, I think, of no doubt. And if, as I hope, it gives to the historic theories an interpretation which saves them from the category of fruitless efforts, because it shows their relation to man's progressive mastery of the materials and the instruments of effective living, it will have succeeded in embodying, what seems to the writer, an essential quality of an ethical text-book.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge my more special and personal obligations. My first indebtedness here as elsewhere is to my teachers, Professors George Trumbull Ladd and George M. Duncan, of Yale University. The editors of *The Journal of*

*Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods* courteously put at my disposal for this book material contributed to the magazine at various dates during the past few years. My colleague, Professor F. A. McKenzie read the second chapter, and favored me with written comments; and Mr. Louis Wallis helped me to some of the references in the same chapter. In the field of genetic science, with all the world I am under obligation to Professor J. Mark Baldwin, and even where I have not been able to follow him, his published works, especially *Thought and Things*, the latest and most finished product of his scholarship, have been constantly held in mind. I am indebted to him also for reading the manuscript, and for discussing with me some of the more important details of the position to which my studies have led. I cannot adequately express the debt of gratitude I have incurred to my colleague, Professor David R. Major, for advice at every stage through which the book has passed, and for the continuous interest he has taken in it up to the time of its passing into the hands of the reader. He has given ungrudgingly of his time; and his appreciative criticism of my work has enabled me to avoid many irrelevancies, and to give my views a more adequate statement than otherwise would have been possible. I have also to thank my colleague, Professor F. P. Graves, for assistance in carrying the book through the press.

A. E. D.

March 7, 1909.





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## CHAPTER I.

### THE NATURE AND METHOD OF GENETIC ETHICS.

What we are to understand by Genetic Ethics can be stated at the outset only in a tentative way, and even then agreement upon a number of debatable questions will have to be assumed. A glance, however, at the title of this essay will make it sufficiently clear that we propose to apply a particular method—the genetic—to a particular subject matter—ethics. But while it may be generally agreed what these two terms mean when taken separately, it is not obvious what limitations are involved when they are brought together in a single term.

It will further our search for a working definition of ethics, if we glance at other ways in which the same subject has been conceived. Thus, there are two well defined tendencies in the history of ethics which should be remarked. The first is the metaphysical, and the second, the epistemological. For the former, the problem centers in the content of the moral judgment. From this point of view, ethics is a science of what is good or bad, etc. It is, in part, concerned with the classification of the various ideal forms of conduct to which actual conduct must conform if it is to receive moral approbation. Its ultimate aim is to formulate an inclusive Ideal which, if it find concrete realization in the conduct of men, imparts to conduct its moral quality. From the epistemological standpoint, the question is not directly, what is good or bad, etc., but, why people call anything good or bad, etc. The point of chief interest here is whether we can validate moral judgments when they are made. Are these judgments, it asks, anything more than prejudices decked out in rational form to give them currency, or are they universal and necessary, and therefore capable of being passed by anyone anywhere? Ethics, so conceived, is

concerned not with the content of the moral judgment, but with its nature, extent, and validity.

Psychological ethics, so-called, is closely allied with each of the tendencies just mentioned. The question that is central in this view of the subject relates to the will, especially to what is called its freedom. The feelings also are incidentally included in its discussions of motives, and their relations to the will are carefully determined. We may indicate the connection of psychological ethics with the metaphysical standpoint by saying that its answer to the question, What has ethical value? is, That which is freely done. Its connection with the other standpoint is seen when it affirms the sovereign choice of the willing subject as the foundation of all moral judgments. The chief contribution of this type of ethical theory is its emphasis on character in contrast to conduct, on the inward spring as opposed to the outward forms of moral behavior.

The genetic method of considering ethics is determined, as these others are, by the point of view from which we intend to look at the subject. We must, therefore, state what that point of view is, and what is the question for the determination of which this method is particularly useful. Now, it is necessary to remark that the question of genesis is needlessly obscure if we fail to draw a distinction which is obvious enough when stated, but which is in danger of being overlooked when not pointed out. We may use the term genesis in either of two meanings, but cannot properly mean both at the same time. Thus we may wish to ascertain the genesis of any fact or set of facts in either an absolute or a relative sense. For example, we may speculate about the origin (genesis) of the world. When we do so we are trying to find some statement which shall tell us about the absolute beginning of the finite universe. It is in reply to this question that the creative hypothesis is proposed, and in the same category must be placed, among others, the chemical theory. In one respect, however, the former is the more satisfactory and illustrates more completely this meaning of the term we are considering; for while the latter has to presuppose the existence of physico-chemical elements and the operation of chemical laws,

facts of the same order as the universe it is trying to account for, the former, presupposing nothing finite, makes its appeal to an infinite, divine Intelligence who is not limited by or to the material through which the universe has its existence.<sup>1</sup> Another, and more immediately practical, meaning of the term genesis is found in the quest for the constant conditions under which, in the empirical world, specified results are known to occur. The history of the inductive sciences provides us with our best illustrations. Starting with the complex facts of ordinary experience, by appropriate methods of analysis, constant simplification of that experience takes place until, if the aim of the process is reached, only the essential factors remain. But because life is always complex and the aim of science is simplification, the search for origins has made necessary the development of experimental methods of research. Experimental research, therefore, whether in the physical or in the anthropological sciences, may be considered as an effort on the part of man to overcome the complexity of direct experience in his endeavor to arrive at the simplest, most elementary case of the general type of experience under consideration. If, therefore, we call the search for an absolute beginning a logical affair, this for a relative beginning which does not take us out of the temporal series, may be called chronological since it finds its cases in earlier and more elementary stages of development.

Our use of the term genetic is connected with the latter of the two meanings just explained. Whether there is an absolute worth attaching to moral judgments, or whether there is anything absolutely good, we do not directly inquire. These questions are legitimate enough in their proper place, but they do not constitute, as we understand it, the genetic problem. The fact with which genetic ethics starts is the fact that all organized societies, primitive or civilized, recognize certain things as moral, and require of the individual that he submit his conduct to the judgment of his fellows. In other words, it starts with morality as an already

<sup>1</sup> For the sense in which the Church has held that the world was created out of nothing, the reader may refer to St. Anselm's *Monologium*, Chapter VIII f.



established fact of life and object of thought. There is, as we conceive it, no material for ethics, genetic or other, except in an already morally organized community. We may say, with this in mind, that genetic ethics attempts to trace the means by which the moral community gets for itself a more complete expression and realization of its own moral possibilities. Or, with a slightly different emphasis, the purpose is to state the conditions which make conduct possible. Or, again, we wish to know what are the factors which constitute a moral situation moral.

It will help to clear the subject from unnecessary ambiguity if we consider further at this point the relation that genetic ethics sustains to other forms and methods of ethics. We said above that it is usual to consider ethics from either a metaphysical, or an epistemological standpoint. We revert to these main types of ethical theory to remark that, like science, in order to get under way and carry out their objects, it is necessary for them to have something to work on. Grist of some sort is necessary here as elsewhere if we are to have anything more than a churning of the wind. Speculation, whether it be philosophical or scientific, is always speculation about something, and what we speculate about, in science and philosophy, is experience. We may, therefore, say that experience of some sort lies back of ethics from whatever standpoint it may be regarded. Life is the source of all our doing and thinking.

We must not forget, however, that metaphysics and epistemology are very highly differentiated forms of speculation. What the ethical problems are from these standpoints we have suggested on a previous page (pp. 1,2). Here we point out that these problems could not be formulated, much less solved, unless there were recognized moral facts and judgments as facts of the empirical order. What sense, for instance, would there be in an attempt to show that goodness is a quality of the World Ground, if no one called anything good? And would it not be the height of folly to undertake to validate a class of judgments of which not a single specimen could be found? It is, therefore, customary for ethics to take both these classes of facts and judgments for granted. They are the presuppositions which ethics, as usually considered, makes; in them it finds the material which it construes for the particular object it has in view. However, before the common judgments and estimates of conduct as they lie in the common consciousness are available for rational treatment at the hands

of philosophical ethics, it is found necessary to subject them to closer scrutiny and careful analysis. While this is no part of philosophical ethics, it is a necessary propaedeutic thereto; and hence we find it usual to include whatever must be done in the way of fitting the material for further consideration under the general title 'prolegomena to ethics.' By the prolegomena to ethics, consequently, is meant all that is necessary to be done in shaping the material and instruments of ethics so as to fit them to the specialized problems which are suggested by the points of view of philosophical ethics. In its relation to the philosophical treatment of ethics, the genetic inquiry carries one fairly into the field of presuppositions. The statement and solution of philosophical questions is no part of genetic ethics, and our independence of them is a gain in so far as it leaves us free to see what the facts are with which philosophical ethics deals. Perhaps this is the best contribution one can make, in this connection, to a deeper insight into the moral life.

We have been engaged, in a general way, with the definition of the field of genetic ethics in its relation to philosophical ethics. Now within recent years the effort has been made to treat morality in a scientific, and even naturalistic, way. The material that is brought into requisition when this interest is uppermost is that which the older and more traditional view has considered as belonging to its prolegomena. There is, thus, no necessary antagonism, but only a mutual division of labors in the field of ethics, as in other departments of knowledge, when the scientific and philosophical interests are properly related. We may ungrudgingly recognize, what is the fact, that, as the result of the application of scientific methods and aims to the subject matter of ethics, a vast amount of material has been gathered, and classifications made which have served, through the study of the natural history of the moral life, to throw considerable light upon the structure of morality itself.<sup>1</sup> In this statement we are only recognizing what evolutionary ethics has accomplished, and what assistance it has rendered in elucidating those practical problems which, from Socrates downward, have engaged the consideration of thoughtful

<sup>1</sup> A recent contribution from this point of view is Westermarck's *The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*.



men. We may even go further and say that in so far as it has brought about a keener appreciation of the historical treatment of ethical questions, and has served to emphasize the social structure of moral behavior, evolutionary ethics has performed an invaluable service. The success which has attended its more ambitious aims, for example, to render a complete and final account of moral phenomena, must be judged by the results it has attained. Our own opinion is that it has not superseded, and in the nature of the case cannot supersede, the philosophical interpretation of the same material; for science, in the sense of the term implied in its use in this connection, is not a substitute for, but an important, and we may say necessary, introduction to philosophy in respect to the entire group of interests around which the life of the race gathers.

In another respect, also, we consider that evolutionary or historical ethics falls short of completeness. It is one thing to describe the several ways in which the moral life, under varying conditions of climate and culture, has been organized; it is another to ascertain the constant factors which constitute the moral situation wherever and whenever found. In the former, we do not get beyond the general, concrete particulars of the group; in the other, we are concerned with the abstract generalizations to which an analysis of the particulars leads. Now, when we speak of analysis there are several things to be borne in mind. It may be held that evolutionary ethics uses analysis, and, because it is science, aims to generalize its conclusions. This is true; but because of the historical motives which have given rise to this type of ethical inquiry, its analysis and generalizations are limited by the material with which it deals. This material, we have said, it finds in the concrete moral situations with which history makes us acquainted. Evolutionary ethics, consequently, may give us light for future guidance as it is able to summarize the experience of the race in the form of moral maxims, prohibitory and commendatory; but it cannot shed any ray backward beyond the limits of the most primitive social organization, and, so far as evolutionary ethics is concerned, we are still in the dark as to the dynamic processes through which

the moral institution, as such, comes into existence, and the means by which the moral judgment becomes a factor in the progressive improvement of the race. This double task is the proper enterprise, as we conceive it, of genetic ethics.

The way in which we have stated the problem of genetic ethics in distinction from that of evolutionary ethics makes it obvious that we are committed to a psychological treatment of the ethical problem. The relation between these two methods of studying the moral life may perhaps be made clearer if we remark that, in our judgment, evolutionary and genetic ethics together constitute what may be described as scientific ethics. They differ in the material they use and the direction in which they move. Evolutionary, or historical, ethics takes the common moral judgments as they are expressed in the moral institutions of the race as its starting point, and undertakes to show that there has been a moral development. For the proof of development it relies upon its ability to show that there has been an increasing complexity in the structure of the several institutions it studies, and that ethical judgments tend to be applied to new aspects and departments of organized endeavor. It also undertakes to point out the stages of this developmental process, and to summarize the law, or laws, of the process as a whole. Genetic ethics is under obligation to the considerations emphasized by evolutionary ethics in so far as it takes its point of departure from the organization of the common moral consciousness, and posits, without question, the social character of all moral phenomena. But what it seeks to do is not to trace out a process of development, but to ascertain what are the elements of any situation which constitute it moral, and what are the functions which the several factors serve in bringing about this result. In other words, genetic ethics is a study in the anatomy and physiology, not in the natural history, of the moral consciousness of the race.

We said, just now, that in a genetic study of the ethical question psychological interests are predominant. We also said, that psychological ethics, so-called, was most intimately connected with philosophical ethics. Further consideration of these relations is necessary. If it is borne in mind that psychological ethics took its form, and carried on its work before the attempted enfranchisement, in our own days, of psychology in the sisterhood of the sciences, the reason is obvious for connecting it with the philosophical interests which are emphasized in epistemology and meta-

physics. Psychology then was a rational psychology, or as we should say, a philosophy of mind. And surely moral phenomena are facts of mind, and may be considered according to the methods of rational psychology. But if we forget that in the meantime, without ceasing to be rational, psychology no longer values its philosophical character, only confusion can arise through the employment of a term which has lost so much of its original meaning. When, therefore, the psychological features of the genetic study of ethics are emphasized, we are to be understood as using the term in its modern connotation. To speak, then, of psychological ethics, if by this is meant anything more than the psychology of ethics, when the modern usage of these terms is followed, is to convict ourselves of a *contradictio in adjecto*. It is not, we think, going too far to say that in so far as the ethical interests are concerned we have no psychology, and in so far as the psychological interest is predominant we do not reach any ethical conclusion. If, for example, we may mark off the field of ethics as dealing with the practical values of facts, it is only perversity to retort that this also is a fact and, therefore, that psychology has its legitimate function in the construction of ethical doctrine. There is a psychology of values because and when we cease to value, and are concerned with the process in which valuation takes place. Psychology may make us better acquainted with the facts of the moral life, but is not able to pass a single judgment of value. As one writer has put it, "Ethics is not a question of origin, but of content; not of causation, but of meaning."<sup>1</sup> The question of origin, when consciously formulated, is the genetic problem with which this essay is concerned.

To complete this survey of the relations in which our subject stands to other methods and ways of approaching the moral phenomena, we must say a word or two as to the possibility of bringing our facts under a theory of organic evolution. The term genetic, whether defining a method or a standpoint, has reference to two fields of investigation. It received its first clear definition and successful application in the work of Darwin in his study of plant and animal life. From there it was taken up by the psychologists in their study of individual and social consciousness. The similarity of the method, however, should not blind us to the limitations

<sup>1</sup> J. Seth: *Ethical Principles*, third edition, p. 30, note 1.



that are placed upon its working by reason of the differences in the material which the biologist and psychologist respectively studies. It is this felt, and explicitly declared, difference between organic and mental phenomena that has led to a change in the form of the genetic method when it gets concrete application to these two distinct, though related, fields. Thus, where we are concerned, as in the biological series, to trace the life history of an organism to its most primitive type, or a single organ to its elementary parts, we are said to be using the *bio-genetic* method. When, on the other hand, we are engaged in analyzing a complex social structure into its several factors, and seek to verify the analysis by reference to earlier stages of its growth, we are using the *psycho-genetic* method. This distinction, recognized by biologists and psychologists alike, we adopt; it is a distinction which refers, primarily, to distinctive fields of inquiry, and this difference in the material requires a modification of the one genetic method which is common to both.<sup>1</sup>

We meet at this point a difficulty which arises from the fact that the fields of investigation which, with respect to method have been marked off as distinct, overlap. Thus man, who is distinguished by reason of his psychic abilities, is at the same time an organic being, and, therefore, may be studied by the biogenetic method; and the animals, if not the plants, although organic, are at the same time conscious, and hence are subject to a psychogenetic study. There are differences, of course, between the psychic capacity of man and the animals, but it is a difference in degree, not in kind. Consciousness *qua* consciousness, wherever found, is the same. Now with respect to the problem of genetic ethics this certainly raises the question whether we are to search for the roots of moral phenomena in the animal series, and, if so, in what sense this may be done. Before our answer can appear, it is necessary to refer again to the limits of the two branches of scientific ethics as they were indicated above. We said that evolutionary and

<sup>1</sup> For a good statement of the relation between 'biological' and 'orthogenic evolution,' the reader may refer to the concluding chapter of L. T. Hobhouse's *Mind in Evolution*.

genetic ethics comprise the field of scientific ethics. The same distinction is also sometimes indicated by the terms historical and biological ethics. The latter pair of terms, however, cannot be accepted because 'biological ethics' begs a whole series of questions which need discussion before the possibility of a 'biological' ethics can be admitted. But whatever the terms by which we divide the field, the distinction to be pointed out is clear enough. Evolutionary ethics, strictly so called, works within the field of historical ethics considered as a study of the forms which the moral life of the race has assumed at various stages of its development. Historical ethics is engaged with what may be called 'institutional morality'. The tests of morality of which it takes cognizance, like its facts, are historically determined. And if we were to ask how it ascertains whether any given facts fall under the moral denomination, the answer would take some such shape as this: From this point of view, *any social organization which seeks to control the behavior of its individual members in the interests of the group* is regarded as moral. This criterion is the result of racial experience, and in turn, becomes the means of determining the social value of all new cases, and it also indicates the limits of inquiry. Hence historical ethics is a study of the group as a group, or of the individual socially determined, and beyond this it is not possible for it to go. Now in so far as its problem within this field is that of development, it may be said to employ the genetic method. This, of course, must be so if genesis means development. But if genesis means also origin, then historical and genetic ethics are by no means identical. The problem of development is common to both because both aim to be scientific, but historical ethics, because it is historical, cannot go beyond the simplest forms of moral organization and in its argument for development is confined to the comparative method. That is to say it may compare one form with another of any selected moral institution, and show that there has been a gradual increase in complexity of structure. But what it cannot do, without changing its character, is to answer the question of origin. Now when scientific ethics raises this question it becomes

distinctively genetic; that is to say, it foregoes the comparative method. For here our question is, What are the factors of the moral situation and their functional bearings? The problem here is to go behind the simplest moral situation, and to disentangle its inner parts and processes. In other words, while historical ethics considers the simplest moral situation as a unit, genetic ethics regards it as a complex to be analyzed. Now in this process of analysis it may happen that the factors which we finally reach are common to men and animals, and that the determination of their function must be referred to the more primitive examples in the animal kingdom. For example, Baldwin holds that "the origin of the moral sense by this method shows it to be an imitative function."<sup>1</sup> Now whether this is so or not, imitation is a psychic fact which is not confined to man. Where then, if we are to trace out the roots from which spring the moral life of man, are we to go if not to the more primitive types of conscious life? We do not say that the animals exhibit moral consciousness; we should hesitate to make this claim for the child for the first few months or years of its existence;<sup>2</sup> but if the human moral consciousness is capable of analysis into elements which are not moral, we must trace these elements as far back as we can without respect to the distinction between man and brute. Because our task is psychological, man and brute have no meaning except as indicating a higher and lower order of conscious existence. In this sense the distinction is on a level with adult and infant.

Two questions are involved, directly or indirectly, in the statements of this paragraph: the question of method and the question of data. On the question of data we have already remarked that ethics is a study of *moral* phenomena. Ethics, like any other science, assumes the existence of the facts it selects for study. But it is, from a genetic standpoint, an important consideration how wide is the distribution of the phenomena involved. Is morality confined to the human species, or do we find it also, in rudimentary

<sup>1</sup> *Social and Ethical Interpretations*, p. 55, first edition.

<sup>2</sup> According to writers on child psychology, moral phenomena are observable at the end of the second and toward the beginning of the third year.



forms but in its essential features, among species of the animal kingdom?<sup>1</sup> The answer to this question is important for our inquiries, because upon its answer will depend whether we are to take our position within either the one or the other of these biological divisions. Now it may be pointed out that the claim is never unequivocally made for the existence of morality in the animal kingdom; it is, on the most favorable interpretation, some rudimentary suggestions of morality which the gregarious life of animals seems to imply. This being the case, the recognition of morality outside the human race is based upon and made possible by the certainty of the fact of the moral life in the human species. The presumption of morality among animals rests upon our right to interpret animal behavior analogically. But even if the analogy is sound and will bear the strain put upon it, it is only after an analysis of human morality has been made that the question is at all possible. Whether morality is anything more than gregariousness, or gregariousness is anything more than herding, are impossible of answer until, upon the basis of *indisputable* moral facts, we have arrived at some statement as to what the moral life implies. It seems, therefore, best to leave the question of animal morality in the place indicated by the present condition of our knowledge. The only sphere where, at the outset, it is safe to assume morality is among the members of the human race.

The other question to which reference was made is that of method. Here we are in a different position. For one thing, comparative psychology has made a great deal more progress than has comparative ethics. In some fields of mental activity we have as much assurance that certain processes are common to men and animals as we have that they are common to adults and children. The comparative study of mental facts is helpful for the reason that the more simple and elementary forms in which they appear in the animal throw instructive light upon their place and function in man. In this way it is possible sometimes to interpret complex conscious situations to which otherwise we might for a long time remain without the clue. It seems to us, therefore, legitimate to make use of the results of comparative psychology in our understanding of the psychological processes which underlie the moral facts.

<sup>1</sup> The reader may refer to an interesting discussion of this subject in Schurman's *Ethical Import of Darwinism*, Chapter I; see also C. Lloyd Morgan's *Animal Behaviour*. pp. 270-282.



In the foregoing our effort has been to exclude from genetic ethics as much as seemed properly to belong to other methods and points of view in their study of the same general problem, and in this way to delimit the area of our inquiries according to some definite plan. We may bring this chapter to an end with a statement of what the genetic method requires when it gets application to the problems suggested by the moral life.

It is, we think, sufficiently clear that the first requirement of the genetic method is that a careful and painstaking analysis be made of the concrete social situations which give rise to the main types of moral judgment. The same demand, from another point of view, may be expressed by saying that we must read these moral judgments back into the social life in which they are capable of receiving concrete significance. These statements emphasize two points which it is important to distinguish. In the first, the social situation is given in its concrete definiteness, and the judgment assumes a form which is quite general and therefore capable of indefinite application and expansion. In the second, the judgment has a fixed form, but the social *milieu* which is to give it its content needs to be constructed by the imagination on the basis of experience. The former case defines what it is that evokes moral estimation; it denotes the subject of the moral judgment. The latter case indicates the method by which we get meaning for the predicate of the same moral judgment. We may illustrate this distinction by any moral judgment whatsoever. If, for example, we take the formula 'This is good' as typical of all moral judgments, and we are challenged as to its content and meaning, where must we look for the subject of the judgment except in some definite situation which is capable of accurate description, or for the predicate except in those results and relations which have become embodied in the situation and through which the situation has and maintains its present character? What the results and relations are which any situation involves can, of course, be ascertained only as we apply the method of analysis to the various cases which come up from time to time for consideration. And, also, as the cases are distinct the results and relations vary; but this is only to

say that the practical reason recognizes a variety of 'goods' any one of which, when it can be predicated of a subject, entitles that subject to moral approbation. But what we wish to emphasize here is that neither what the subject is, nor what the predicate of a moral judgment means, is possible of genetic consideration unless we define each as the result of an analysis of the concrete situation in which both subject and predicate are essential and interrelated parts. Let it, therefore, be admitted that the genetic problem implies an examination of particular cases of acknowledged moral significance as necessary to the work it undertakes or is required to do.

It should be pointed out in this connection that there are limitations within which this task is either practicable or possible. For instance, if it is understood to express the demand for a classification of the various types of moral behavior, this would be to do over again the work which, as we have said, has been admirably pursued by writers on evolutionary ethics, and, therefore, to obliterate the distinction between the two fields which has already been indicated. The point of view from which the statement is made is that of the moral judgment; and what we call attention to is that the moral judgment functions within definite concrete situations for the purpose of defining their moral quality. To see how this is so requires not that we should come to our problems with some previously formulated and somewhat abstract doctrine of judgment, but that we should analyze the situation which concerns us with a view to showing the conditions of the process of moralization which is actually going on. We may say, tautologically if you please, that the moral judgment is a function of the moral situation, and it is only as we understand the latter that the former has any meaning.

But, secondly, the genetic problem and method have been confined, in current literature, to the question of development.<sup>1</sup> By development is usually meant the growth in structure and function of typical psychic processes at different levels of individual conscious existence. Development is contrasted with evolution which

<sup>1</sup> E. g. by Baldwin.

is interested in the same problem from the standpoint of the race.<sup>1</sup> In either case, however, growth is the characteristic note struck, and each is genetic because attention is directed to the movement from lower to higher stages of selected groups of data which are brought under consideration. Whether this is the best designation of the general field which is here marked out we do not care, and it is not important for us to consider. But even though we have as clear an appreciation of the need for an undertaking of this character as have those whose work has contributed so much to its elucidation, there seems to be a demand in the field of ethical inquiry, for a more restricted investigation which, although restricted, does not lose its character as genetic science. We should, therefore, say that, although the question of development is not far away in the following studies, it is subordinate to the endeavor to ascertain the instrumental character of the factors which constitute the social *milieu* through which the moral judgment and feelings are mediated. Before the question of development, that is to say, comes the question of maintenance, and it is chiefly with this that we are concerned, not only as coming first in time, but as being prior in order of importance. The moral judgments and feelings are not only psychological facts; they are, at the same time, facts which are shot through and through with concrete social meaning and significance. Likewise, the social community is not only a self-propagating body; it is, before this and by reason of it, a self-maintaining organization, and it is more with the conditions of its maintenance than of its propagation that we are to deal. But it should not be forgotten that maintenance is no less a function than is development; nor can there be any development which is subversive of the principles which control maintenance. And it may be fairly asked whether development is anything more than the result of the application of the principles of maintenance to larger areas of life, and to more and more diversified data of the same general character as that in regard to which the

<sup>1</sup> This distinction is made in Baldwin's *Development and Evolution*, and yet the title of an earlier work is *Mental Development in the Child and the Race*.



principles of maintenance have been determined. Hence, while we do not underestimate the importance of that aspect of the genetic problem and method which already have received strong emphasis and wide recognition, we affirm that the prior question has not received sufficiently careful consideration.<sup>1</sup> It is to this neglected feature of the genetic problem, in so far as it relates to ethics, that attention is to be directed throughout. We have, that is to say, not only to ascertain what are the data, but to point out what are the functional relations which obtain among the data of our moral situations by reason of which they maintain their character as *moral* situations.

In his book on *Mind in Evolution*, Hobhouse recognizes the distinction of the text between the genesis and the development of mental life. Concerning the genetic inquiry as it is defined by this contrast, he remarks that he is not "concerned with what is called (as I think, confusedly and inappropriately called) the ultimate nature of the mind. So far as its origin is concerned, we shall take it as a factor in organic evolution, and shall content ourselves with pointing out certain more primitive factors of which it is the natural development. In regard to its nature, we shall be principally occupied, not with what Mind is felt to be by its possessor, but rather with its operations as apparent to an onlooker" (p. 5). As to the other question, he remarks that the evolution of mind is a term which he uses "not in the sense of its origin, but in the sense of that unrolling of its full nature which is what evolution most strictly means. If mind is the highest thing, orthogenic evolution<sup>2</sup> (by which Hobhouse means 'the growth of mind')

<sup>1</sup> Baldwin informs the writer that the objective anthropological point of view and method suggested in the text, and to which reference is made throughout, has been recognized by him in his studies of religion, and that he has marked off a stage in the genetic method as 'anthropogenetic' to distinguish 'human progress from anterior (animal) progress' in addition to the former distinctions of 'biogenetic' and 'psycho-genetic.' See his *Dictionary of Philosophy*, Vol. II, 1902, p. 459, art. 'Religion'.

<sup>2</sup> The selection of the term 'Orthogenic Evolution' for *mental* development is unfortunate in view of the fact that Eimer (*On Orthogenesis*) had already preëmpted the term 'orthogenesis' to indicate a theory of evolution which depends to a large extent on

must consist of the unfoldment of all that there is of latent possibility of Mind, the awakening of the powers, the development of its scope" (p. 5). In this statement the genetic is clearly distinguished from the developmental and evolutionary problems, problems which Baldwin crowds together under the one term genetic. The result of this crowding is that interest comes to center more and more on one side of the contrasted set of questions, and Baldwin ends with limiting genetic science to the investigation of growth processes. It may be said that, in this particular, Dewey's *Studies in Logical Theory* is a necessary corrective to the view of Baldwin, a correction, however, which is no less one-sided than is the view which it supplements.<sup>1</sup>

We may bring these remarks on the problem and method of genetic ethics to a close with the following most general statement of the task which lies before us. We propose, in what follows, to study the concrete moral situation with a view to show what the factors are which constitute it moral and what are the forces which operate to maintain and develop it. In other words, we are to study the structural and functional relations of moral consciousness.

*physiological* causation. The two views, however, approach one another in laying emphasis on the fact that evolution is not an accidental but a definite or directed process the conditions of which it is the business of science to point out.

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written, Baldwin has thought himself beyond the generalizations of his earlier works, and in his *Thought and Things* may be found much food for reflection for all who are interested in genetic problems. As examples of the 'crowding' to which the text refers, the reader may consider Baldwin's treatment of Habit and Accommodation, the Theory of Pleasure-Pain, Attention, etc., in *Mental Development*. Psychological motives appear more clearly in *Social and Ethical Interpretations* and indicate the line of advance which is made in this book over the earlier volume.

## CHAPTER II.

### SOCIAL AND ETHICAL PHENOMENA.

Growth of interest in social and sociological questions is a fact of contemporary life. In politics this is seen in the modifications, among the leading world powers, of a military conception of the state, and the readjustment of political organization to fit it to the economic conditions of the present day. In commerce, we are witnessing the passing of the extreme individualism which for two hundred years has kept the many poor, and we are trying to find some way by which the profits of labor may be more widely and equitably distributed. In society, the relations of the classes is acknowledged to be unsatisfactory, and some method is yet to be devised by which mutual sympathy and understanding will be possible between the various crafts and professions. In science there is proceeding a rapid adaptation of the conclusions of learned inquiry to the convenience and comfort of living, and along with the extension of the boundaries of scientific endeavor into anthropological and ethnological problems we are coming to entertain a less mechanical conception of what a science should be. In philosophy, the old formal idealism is already dead, new methods and aims are coming to take the place of the old, and it is not unreasonable to expect that in the present generation we shall see philosophy restored to its rightful place as an interpretation of life. All these movements, and others of similar character, emphasize the humanitarian spirit by which we in our day are being moved; and this spirit, while it has directly stimulated interest in social and sociological relations, has reacted upon those conceptions which have commonly been held as to the nature, scope and warranty of morality.

It would be possible, in view of this broader humanitarian



demand, to show that the reconstructed notion of ethics which it implies, emphasizes anew the more original and satisfactory view of the subject which received expression, in its first systematic form, in the ethics of Aristotle. But what we are more interested in, at the present, is that this relation between ethical and social phenomena, however clearly it may have been seen by Aristotle, is today a more complex affair by as much as the modern state, in its domestic and foreign relations, is more complex than the Greek City-state which practically had no foreign relations, and limited its citizenship to as many as the town (*πόλις*) could conveniently afford protection to in time of threatened invasion. We have to do not only with more intricate, and with a larger number of relationships. Our social unit itself is vague and shifting. This is due, no doubt, to the broadening of our social sympathies in various directions. This shifting of the boundaries of the social structure is a constant menace to the ethical foundations of our modern social life. If, therefore, we are to define and maintain the rights of ethics as distinct from, though related to sociology, and if we are to ascertain what the ethical functions are which society implies, what we need is not so much a natural history of the social process, nor, indeed, an account of the several types of social organization, as a genetic determination of the social concept itself.

The root idea lying at the foundation of the term society and its various derivatives—social, sociability, etc.—is that of association. Wherever individuals are associated together so that certain conditions and results may be indicated as the predicates of this united life and action, we may fairly be said to be dealing with a society.<sup>1</sup> In this broad sense of the word, it makes no difference whether we have in mind the common life of wasps and bees, of ants, or of men, for in each case we find certain conditions existing and certain results being brought about which are directly depend-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Baldwin, *Social and Ethical Interpretations*, fourth edition, p. 486. "The determination of phenomena as social is only possible under the two-fold requirement as to matter and functional method."



ent upon the fact of association. All that need be implied by association in this connection is a certain 'togetherness' as characterizing and constituting the group we have in mind. Thus, for example, the union of a group may be determined by geographical considerations. We are familiar with this fact in what is known as the distribution of species under the selective operation of conditioning environments. Within indefinite boundaries we find certain kinds of flora and fauna, and beyond, certain other kinds. Association, even in this broad use of the term, is defined by certain conditions which are determinant of the life history of the individual and of the group to which the individual belongs. We may expect to find that the character of the conditions changes from species to species, and from lower to higher forms of organic existence. But aside from the question of what the conditions are which association, in any given case, implies, we shall find it true of all groups which are entitled to be called social, that these conditions may be pointed out, and in pointing them out we have taken the first step in establishing the social character of the relations which are determined by them.

But the conditions must determine, or be accompanied by, certain results. That is to say, consequences must follow from the conditions which association involves if we are dealing with a social group. It might be found, however, that the 'togetherness' of association took such a form that it is impossible to trace out consequences which are directly dependent upon the conditions involved in that fact. We have to recognize, that is, the possibility of conditions existing which are not operative in the life history of the individual or of the group, and yet that these conditions are determined by the association which is the root idea of the social concept. Thus we may say of any individual or group of individuals who, in view of the political duties that citizenship defines, refrain from the performance of those duties while retaining their political status (the 'togetherness'), that they are potentially, though not actually, political (social), or, as regards the whole round of their social duties, that they are only incompletely social. But even this much can be said only if we admit that there is no radical separation

in fact between rights and duties, and that function may supervene upon a redistribution of forces within the social organism as a whole. Hence, it seems to follow that the fully developed social concept requires not only that association be defined as a set of conditions, but that consequences should be determined by these conditions for the group in its relations to the individual, and *vice versa*.

It is an interesting phenomenon of the literature of sociology that the concept 'society' is taken with so little seriousness. In a descriptive way, without pretense to scientific accuracy, we may be allowed to say that sociology is, in some sort, a study of society. We presume that this conception of the subject plays a more or less important rôle, consciously or unconsciously, in parts of the subject's development, if not over its whole range, with every writer on sociology. It was, therefore, thought possible to get wisdom from those who cultivate this field, and that our labors would be lightened at this point by acknowledged borrowing, and that we should be excused the presumption of stating for a sister science what its proper business is. But so far from getting the satisfaction we looked for, sociologists almost seem to vie with one another in taking 'society' as a joke. Giddings,<sup>1</sup> it is true, defined society as "a rationally developing group of conscious beings, in which converse passes into definite relationships that, in course of time, are wrought into a complex and enduring organization." But one can hardly blame the sociologist for not remaining with a statement in which there are so many unanalyzed concepts, and which in its total impression is so ambiguous. The following from Ward is not so much a definition of what society is as of a point of view for its consideration. "In general," he writes, "it may be said that society as a whole, including all its structures and institutions, constitutes a *mechanism*."<sup>2</sup> Coming to works that fall within the present century, we find the tone is changed and the way is opened for that vague generality which, to so great an extent, characterizes the products of the sociologist's labors. "Society is, of course," says Ross, "a kind of fiction. There is nothing to it, after all, but people affecting one another in various ways."<sup>3</sup> It is not merely due to the development of

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Sociology* (1896), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Outlines of Sociology* (1899), p. 170. Cf. Spencer's 'Society is an organism.'

<sup>3</sup> *Social Control* (1901), p. 293.

this as a personal attitude, but as expressing a general agreement that in the same writer's *Foundations of Sociology*, which appeared four years later, no attempt is made to state what the term 'society' connotes. Stuckenberg, consequently, may be regarded as expressing a fact when he writes that "society is as yet only a word whose rich content is to be discovered."<sup>1</sup> But not much hope is held out from the side of sociology for a better understanding if Small represents the current sociological opinion. "We have lost confidence," he says, "in the utility of the word 'society,' that has given sociologists so much trouble. The term has such persistent structural—i. e., statical—associations that it starts us with false presumptions."<sup>2</sup> In its place he substitutes Ross' 'people affecting one another in various ways' or, as he prefers to say, 'the process of human association,' and remarks that "this shifting of attention . . . is not a mere verbal change. It marks real progress in discovery" (p. 184). With the details of the sociologist's business we have nothing to do. This interesting exhibit is made as a justification of the way in which the problem of this chapter has been handled so far as it relates to sociological concepts. We need some clear distinction as to sociological and ethical data, and this at the most is what is attempted in the present connection.

We may now look at this analysis of the social concept more closely, to ascertain if possible what it implies. It will be understood, of course, that the study of particular forms of social organization—the family, the guild, etc.—present concrete problems, and need to be studied with reference to the conditions and results which are peculiar to each. We have to leave this work to the sociologist. Our interest is in the group concept itself, and when this interest is satisfied certain characteristics come to light which, in varying ways, find their illustration in the societies of primitive and civilized life.

It will help to make our definition of society more tangible if we inquire, in the first place, what are the elements which association of the social type involves. 'Togetherness' may be admitted to be as characteristic of a piece of mechanism, for example, a watch, as it is of what we call society. It may even be maintained that the watch

<sup>1</sup> *Sociology* (1903), Vol. I, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *General Sociology* (1905), p. 183.



exhibits the relationship and involves the functions which have been said to belong to a society in a more striking fashion than some societies do. We have in mechanical instruments and inventions admirable examples of the adjustment of parts in a common medium for effecting specified results. And yet, by common consent, the term social has been limited to the associations of organic beings. Between the finest example of mechanical skill as exhibited in the most complex and most sensitive piece of machinery and the most loosely organized of social groups there is not merely a difference of degree but one of kind. Wherein does this difference consist? As we have seen, it is not a matter of structure; may it not then be a matter of the elements of which the structure is composed? Assuming that this is true, and making our statement as generic as possible, it may be said that the organization of social groups takes place through the incorporation of units all of which have characteristics that are common, and each of which, within the limits determined by the common qualities, are capable of doing the same things. This statement, however, requires to be safeguarded in two particulars. We do not mean to predicate identity of parts, nor do we assert a similarity of function for the parts. As to the first point, the underlying conditions of association are ultimately biological; and as to the second, they are the variations within the biological series which make possible those differentiations of functions which everywhere accompany social organization. There is, that is to say, a natural unity which characterizes the association which is capable of serving social ends, and these ends themselves, in the first instance, are conditioned by the biological reference which has already been made. It is not so with a piece of machinery which secures the diversity through which it works out the determined result in the individual parts, a diversity which limits each part to the doing of a single thing. In consequence of this fundamental difference, social laws can never get application to the world of invention, nor can mechanical laws illuminate or regulate the world of society.

An interesting illustration of the position maintained in the text may be found in a letter addressed to Baron Kaneko Kentaro by

the late Herbert Spencer under date of August 26, 1892, and which appeared in the London *Times* of January 18, 1904. The question relates to the intermarriage of foreigners and Japanese. Mr. Spencer writes:

It is not at root a question of social philosophy. It is at root a question of biology. There is abundant proof, alike furnished by the intermarriages of human races and by the interbreeding of animals, that when the varieties mingled diverge beyond a certain slight degree *the result is inevitably a bad one* in the long run. I have myself been in the habit of looking at the evidence bearing on this matter for many years past, and my conviction is based on numerous facts derived from numerous sources. This conviction I have within the last half-hour verified, for I happen to be staying in the country with a gentleman who is well known and has had much experience respecting the interbreeding of cattle; and he has just, on inquiry, fully confirmed my belief that when, say of the different varieties of sheep, there is an interbreeding of those which are widely unlike, the result, especially in the second generation, is a bad one—there arise an incalculable mixture of traits, and what may be called a chaotic constitution. And the same thing happens among human beings—the Eurasians in India, the half-breeds in America, show this. The philosophical basis of this experience appears to be that any one variety of creature in course of many generations acquires a certain constitutional adaptation to its particular form of life, and every other variety similarly acquires its own special adaptation. The consequence is that, if you mix the constitutions of two widely divergent varieties which have severally become adapted to widely divergent modes of life, you get a constitution which is adapted to the mode of life of neither—a constitution which will not work properly, because it is not fitted for any set of conditions whatever.

This organic similarity of the individuals of a social group, in the second place, exercises its influence on the group itself. From one point of view, the group may be said to determine, and, from another, to be determined by the individual particulars without which it cannot be conceived. This is only to say that the shifting characteristics of the component parts is correlated with the abiding character of the whole. In logical terms, this means that the group is a true universal, and not merely a formula of the common

qualities of its subsumed particulars. This statement is important in view of the two main theories which, in varying forms, have been held as to the nature of society. The first tends to look upon society as a sum of its parts. This is the theory of collectivism. The second regards society as an organism which, after the analogy of the individual, gives birth to its own members, and limits their functions according to its own particular needs. This is the biological theory. The view we have stated acknowledges the individuality which is the strong point of the former theory, and recognizes the functional relations of the latter. The biological theory is inadequate because it overlooks the undetermined possibilities of the individual; the theory of collectivism is deficient because it does not recognize the organic character of association, and makes it entirely conventional (Social Contract). In our view, 'social group' is understood as an organic concept, and hence the relations between it and the component individuals may be stated in one of several ways. From the standpoint of the group, there is emphasized coöperation in the performance of a common, complex task; from the standpoint of the individuals, specialization of function is necessary for the maintenance and development of the higher ends of living. But whether we state the relation in terms of the outward activities or of the inner motives, means, or functions, in either case is emphasized the reciprocal demands that are emphasized in every truly social relation.

That form of philosophical individualism which we find in Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* when transplanted to the Continent worked out, in social theory, in Rousseau's statements of the *Social Contract*, a work which had its progenitor in Hobbe's *Leviathan*. The common purpose of these, as of all other works on social philosophy, was to give an account of the grounds on which constituted authority reposes. It was not, as popular references to the theory would seem to imply, to undermine constituted authority. Historically, this impression is due to the appeal of the French Revolutionists to the individualistic theory of which we are now speaking. We have perhaps a better illustration of its legitimate consequences in the American Republic whose Constitution is indebted in some important particulars to the individualism of the group of men whose names



have been mentioned. Individualism, as we admit, is not a sufficient account of the origin and nature of society, but provision must be made, in any theory which professes to be adequate, for the truth which the Social Contract, historically, serves to illustrate. Nor shall we be disposed to underestimate its importance when we remember that it is the principle of that Protestantism,—a principle which for many generations had been nurtured in the common soil of Roman Catholicism, which freed the mind and conscience of the world from the tyranny of authority, although not from authority, and made modern science, art, literature, philosophy, and social order possible. It is, therefore, not too extravagant a demand that is made when in the interests of conservatism the principle of individuation is, as due to this demand, recognized as one of the fundamental factors of a properly constituted society.<sup>1</sup>

What was termed above the biological theory is much older than the theory of collectivism. It received its first systematic statement in the Republic of Plato, and has been the ideal of most writers whose efforts in social philosophy are regarded as utopian. It errs, not so much in what it says, as in what it denies. But its positive contribution to the conception of society is only suggestive, and has to be reinterpreted in view of all the facts which an analytic study of society clearly emphasizes. Thus we may say that while the theory of collectivism starts with a false equality among individuals, the biological theory gives a false ground for the subordination of individuals, and in the end comes to a wrong estimate of that subordination itself. This is always the danger of a theory, whether of physical, social, or religious facts, which relies upon the principle of analogy. For example, it does not follow that because the individual man has a head which is the seat of reason, a breast which is the seat of the noble passion, and an abdomen which is the seat of the coarser appetites, as Plato held, that therefore these same distinctions will be found in the state in the three classes respectively of philosophers or the ruling class, warriors or the militant class, and merchants, artisans, agriculturalists and slaves, or the servant class. It does not follow because each man in each of the social classes is subject to all of the distinctions which are distributed throughout the state. Logically stated, the fallacy underlying the theory is that what is taken collectively in the one case is taken distributively in

<sup>1</sup> The ethical implications of this principle are treated below in Chapter IV on The Moral Self.



the other. In other words, analogical reasoning is valid only on the supposition that there is a homologous relation between the two structures which are implicated, taken as a whole. But whatever the defects of this theory may be, it does serve to emphasize as an essential aspect of society the fact that there are functional relations which must be taken account of, and it is with this as a clue that we are enabled to overcome the one-sidedness of the theory of collectivism.

Third, all social phenomena are phenomena of consciousness. It is this fact that is overlooked in every attempt to give a mechanical or biological account of the origin and development of society. Of the fact of consciousness there is no dispute, but of its distribution there is difference of opinion. But with this we are not at present concerned. We are merely interested to point out that social phenomena fall within the field broadly marked out as conscious. The speculative question of the (absolute) origin of consciousness lies outside the boundaries of a scientific inquiry. And the question of how far back among the pre-human ancestors of man we are able successfully to apply the tests of conscious existence is a matter to be experimentally decided. The only point we have in mind just now is that, however wide or narrow the limits of consciousness may prove to be, we are not justified in using terms which imply consciousness to describe groups of organic existences which have not been considered specifically with reference to their conscious endowment, as seems to be done when the term 'colony' is used to describe a group of cells making up a tissue or an organ. We have no special interest in denying consciousness to the cell, if only it is not a gratuitous assumption but a demonstrated fact. But so long as it is only an assumption and not an ascertained fact, we are obliged, by the requirements of a strictly logical method, to deny that social and organic phenomena may be equated. The organic world is much wider than the social world, in our present knowledge, and, 'consciousness' is limited in its application to the higher forms of organic existence. But the more important point is whether social facts are conscious facts. While social phenomena are organic, as we have seen, not all organic phenomena are social, because some organic phenomena

are not conscious. Now our question is whether the same, or a different, relation exists between social and conscious phenomena. It is enough to say that phenomena of consciousness are present wherever we find that complexity and interrelationship of parts which the term association implies. There is, moreover, the existence of certain conditions which become effective in producing definite results. Consciousness in its several forms makes a difference in the life history of those individuals and groups within which it is effective.<sup>1</sup> Things happen as a result which would not happen but for its operation. And all our social facts, because they are facts of consciousness, are facts of a different order from what they would be in the absence of this special quality. This is the reason why Lloyd Morgan differentiates between organic and mental evolution, and uses the term 'conscious control' to indicate the method of the latter in contrast to 'struggle for existence' which is the method of the former.<sup>2</sup> The presence of consciousness is that which distinguishes mental from organic phenomena, and as coming under the former class our social group must be studied by the methods that are appropriate to psycho-genetic problems.

We have seen that no characterization of the social situation would be adequate which did not take account of the fact of consciousness. This is even more true, or more obviously true, of those situations which are called moral. No one, for instance, would think of applying ethical tests and standards to a situation from which the element of consciousness was entirely missing, and no one would think of requiring the full measure of moral quality in those relations in which defect or deficiency of conscious factors was detected.<sup>3</sup> In respect to the implication of consciousness, therefore, the moral and the social concept seem to agree. But no

<sup>1</sup> This statement is not to be interpreted in a mystical sense. We mean to lay emphasis upon the instrumental character of consciousness. In the absence of *criteria* there is no ground on which we may predicate consciousness as a fact. Consciousness must do something to be recognized.

<sup>2</sup> *Habit and Instinct*, pp. 273, 274.

<sup>3</sup> As, for example, with the idiot or the insane.

sooner do we reach this assuring position than we begin to be aware that the agreement is more seeming than real. This may be illustrated by reference to the tendencies which are working themselves out in the field of modern sociology. Herbert Spencer's aim was to bring social phenomena under the general evolutionary theory which had been developed in connection with the study of organic life. The fact that this theory was formulated as a means of explaining cosmic processes was not without its influence upon the direction which these studies took. It is now generally admitted that Spencer's sociology is the place where the Synthetic Philosophy fails to support the theory of development which was supposed, by its author, to be the golden thread which united the several parts of his work. It is also generally admitted that the failure is due to the fact that he relied upon a biologically developed *apparatus criticus* to maintain the identity of social and biological phenomena. As we now see, all that he did was to show the possibility of describing in terms of one science the facts of another.<sup>1</sup> But in doing this, as the sociologists are coming to admit, he overlooked some important differences between organic and social phenomena, differences which are connected with the place and play of consciousness in organized societies. It would not be accurate to describe the effect of this recognition as a reaction against the earlier sociological movement, but it has resulted, within the field of sociology, in a modified interpretation of the biological formula in its application to social data. Instead of considering evolution as an ontological fact, it is now thought of as a methodological device, to be used, indeed, in tracing out the historic growth of societies, but, at the same time, to be adapted to the material in such ways as furthered the ends for which, in the first place, it was adopted. This adaptation has come about as the result of the larger place that is now admitted consciousness occupies in social phenomena.

But while there has been an attempt, on the part of sociologists,

<sup>1</sup> Another example of this is found in Drummond's early work on *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*.



to decipher the psychic factors of the social order,<sup>1</sup> it has not been forgotten that they are concrete social situations, of which consciousness is only a fractional part, with which sociology properly deals. Commerce, politics, amusement, morality, art, religion,—all these it is claimed are social phenomena, and, therefore, however they are related to other sciences, it is to sociology that we must go for our full account. Every science which deals with man and his activities presupposes, it is said, a sociology, because the task of this science is to make out “the different groupings of persons, and of detecting their interrelations, in such a way that the content of the whole life-process will appear, both in kind and in proportion, in the interrelations of their activities.”<sup>2</sup> But when these claims are understood, when sociology undertakes to be a science of the whole content of the anthropological data available at any time, a demand is rightly made in the name of ethics for a more accurate and historic delimitation of their respective areas. For it may be pointed out that, from the time of Aristotle, ethics has been engaged in the study of all the concrete relationships into which, with the development of civilization, human beings have come. Here then is a direct issue resulting from the agreement between sociology and ethics that the phenomena of both are facts of consciousness. Sociology having been nearly absorbed by biology, appropriates material from all available sources to escape from submission, by starvation, to any other science.<sup>3</sup>

It is not necessary that we should do more than suggest that this unsatisfactory relation of ethics to sociology is the outcome of mistaking a distinction of method for a real difference of fact. This is seen in the statement that Small gives of the general thesis which he is concerned to defend in *The Significance of Sociology for Ethics*. “Ethics,” he writes, “must consist of empty forms until Sociology can indicate the substance to which the forms

<sup>1</sup> Lester Ward's *Psychic Factors of Civilization* is an illustration in point.

<sup>2</sup> A. W. Small, *Significance of Sociology for Ethics*, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> This is seen nowhere better than in the monograph by Small referred to in the previous note.

apply.”<sup>1</sup> In this conception, ethics is an abstract science which may have methodological value, but which can never provide for itself concrete verification. This may impose on the unwary, but it is as fallacious in logic as it is false in fact. Logically, the contrast, if it is pertinent, must be based upon a single principle of division, and the contradictory of ‘formal’ is not ‘substance,’ or even ‘content,’ but ‘not formal,’ and this may include anything in the universe with the single exception of the ‘formal.’ But though we may straighten out the logical entanglements which mar the coherency of this view, it will not help the cause overmuch. We may claim that since Kant the separation between form and content, a separation which lies at the root of the Kantian Antinomies, is not a fruitful one. There is no more certain way of paralyzing human thinking than to divide it against itself. And this Kant himself saw, although he did not successfully guard against it. For to adapt, without essentially changing the meaning, one of Kant’s dicta, we may say that “forms without contents are empty, and contents without forms are blind.” You can have, consequently, neither an ethics nor a sociology on such a principle of division as this. The formal and the material enter into the construction of all sciences, and the two in question are no exception. Let it therefore be admitted that ethics has its material and that sociology has its forms, and the problem then reduces to an attempt to indicate the tests by which the phenomena of the one science are to be distinguished from those of the other.

The view of the relation of ethics and sociology criticised in the text assumes that the one subject matter is common to both sciences. The question then arises as to the distribution between the sciences of this common subject. And the argument seems to be that since ethics is a study of its forms, then, no forms being left unaccounted for, sociology must be a science of the substances to which the forms apply. We do not dispute the assumption on which this view relies as will be seen below, but we do doubt the consequences which are deduced from it. For, on such a supposition, the possibility of ethics is not made more reasonable and it

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 9.



opens up the question why there should be any such thing as ethics at all. Accordingly we find the author who is taken as representing this view, after carefully differentiating the psychological, the ethical, and the sociological problems, absorbing them all under the single head of sociology. The "sociological problem," he writes, "is, first, the psychological problem as it is presented, not by the phenomena of the psycho-physical process in the individual, but as it is encountered in the process of the same mechanism when individuals are in contact with each other. The sociological problem is, second, the positive or concrete side of the ethical problem, namely, the determination of actual values as distinguished from the logic of the categories of valuation. Or once more, the sociological problem is to express objectively situations between persons, and the interchange of influence between person and person in the situations, and then to determine the positive or negative effects of those reactions upon some relationship of the situation taken as a norm."<sup>1</sup> "In this way," Small goes on immediately to say, "we divide the sociological from the psychological problem, which is to express what occurs within the individuals as such, and from the ethical problem, which is to indicate the place of these activities abstractly considered in a system of logically related facts." But so far from 'dividing' the one from the other, what we have is a wholesale appropriation of territory belonging to these related sciences, upon a misinterpretation of the tenure by which they are held. The case is 'argued,' but it must be thrown out of court, because the major premises on which it relies—the definitions of the other sciences—while pertinent *ad hoc*, do not get verification by the testimony of the experts—the psychologists and the ethicists—within their respective fields.

When it is said, as was said above, that ethics has a material as well as a formal side, it is obvious that we are claiming for the subject-matter of ethics a concrete, historical status. It is material, in other words, of a social character. But does not this statement claim the entire social field for ethics? In one sense this is true. It is a fact, whether we can trace the historic growth of societies or not, that ethics finds its data where sociology finds its, and there are no social phenomena which do not belong equally to these two sciences. The facts with which these sciences deal are coetaneous. In the point of view from which we are now considering the prob-

<sup>1</sup> Small, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

lem, therefore, the social and the ethical spheres coincide. And if we try to find the *differentia* of ethics by a study of the outward conditions and results of association, we shall find it not only a difficult but an impossible task; and, further, we shall be obliged to confess that the utmost we have accomplished is to denote the marks of a social group. It is because historical interests predominate in sociology that it has an easy task in resolving all the cases which are claimed by ethics as her own into social phenomena. For sociology has to do with the matter-of-fact relationships which constitute our anthropological groups. This is true whether we define sociology as a study of society or of interests, for in both is emphasized the social structure of the units of sociological science. And when, from this standpoint, the material is studied with a view to the discovery of the relations that obtain either within the groups or as binding groups together, we have no means whatever of distinguishing between those facts which have and those which have no moral quality. Murder and a deed of heroic self-sacrifice are both, from this point of view, social facts; but no one supposes them to be on the same level ethically.

Another line of remark may be indicated. Ethics has a long history. This history is instructive because it is a record not only of theory but of cases. The concrete interests in connection with which the science of ethics has developed have made it, on the practical side, very largely casuistical. Practical ethics is casuistry; it is the effort to determine social action along moral lines, to bring social behavior into connection with, so that it may be the social realization of, moral principles. But when, from this point of view, we ask what the moral principles are according to which social action is to be determined, we are met with the statement that "a sort of Moral Tact is the source of such practice of casuistry as can rightly commend itself to the seeker after the Virtuous Life."<sup>1</sup> Casuistry, that is to say, is more an art than a science, and is not, in the nature of the case, qualified to lay bare the

<sup>1</sup> Ladd, *Philosophy of Conduct*, p. 420. The reader is referred to the entire chapter for a discussion of the sources and sphere of Casuistry as well as of the conflict of duties.

grounds of moral judgment. And if we turn to the history of ethics as a history of theories, we shall find that the views of the moral life which have been held by different schools is so connected with particular types of metaphysical systems that its tests of what constitutes morality are throughout contingent. But while we can not, on either of these counts, provide ourselves with a *differentia* of moral in contrast with social action, we may, in view of the historical development of the moral life and of moral theory, arrive at a general statement of some importance, and which may open the way to what we are in search of. This statement is: *Ethics has concerned itself with ethical principles as principles of social organization, and has paid attention to the theoretical construction of the science under ideas of the end toward which conduct should be directed.*

We may now emphasize two characteristic developments within the field of the history of ethics which throw light upon the problem before us. In the first, ethics appears as a theory of the end.<sup>1</sup> Now when we ask how the end or ends of the moral life are to be ascertained, we are referred to the moral life in its concrete particularity. A study of group phenomena if it is carried over a sufficiently long period of time, and takes account of a sufficiently wide diversity of fact and conditions will make possible the formulation of a generalization which, *pro hac vice*, may be considered as the law of the evolutionary process of the phenomena in question. This law when it has been studied may then serve as an ideal, as a principle of organization for experience along the indicated line. This is what is done in other lines of scientific research, and there can be no objection, *a priori*, to ethics attempting the same thing. But we should bear in mind that whatever practical purposes this may serve, the inductive process, ethically, can get started only by presupposing the moral tests which, *ex hypothesi*, the method was invoked as a means of discovering.

<sup>1</sup> For a statement of this point of view cf. Muirhead, *The Elements of Ethics*, pp. 89-169.



The other line of development is this. Instead of seeking the test of what is morally worthy in the ends toward which action is to be directed, some, especially the British moralists, have interested themselves in the facts of moral behavior itself. Here, of course, belong the whole of psychological ethics, so called. Now the facts of ethics, according to these writers, are subjective. They belong characteristically to the active, living, moral subject. Hence ethics becomes a study of the individual with a view to his moral endowment. From this point of view, it expresses itself in the form of theories of conscience, of the will, of motive, etc. In contrast with the former line of development, which concerns itself with *theories of the ends* of moral behavior, ethics, psychologically considered, eventuates in some *theory of the means* of moral behavior. And when so stated, it is obvious that the means, no better than the end, provides us with the tests or *differentiæ* of moral behavior itself. All we can say, from this standpoint, is that man, as man, is fitted for conduct. But such a statement presupposes the distinguishing characteristics of moral behavior; it does not explicitly state them.

We have seen that the history of ethics emphasizes two well-marked tendencies in the effort to state the characteristic qualities of those actions which are denominated moral. These tendencies alternate between objective and subjective theories of morals. Neither, whatever else it may do, provides an answer to the question with which we set out. That question was, What are the forms of behavior properly called moral? It is, therefore, pertinent to ask whether the failure of the historical theories is not due to the fact that this question has been wrongly stated. And may it not be that if re-formulated we shall find a way to the answer which has not been found?

Let us then before leaving the question with a *non possumus*, look at it again, and this time from a definitively genetic point of view. It is here, if anywhere, that we find relief from the strain of a vain search. For while hitherto we have been bound, by the form of the inquiry, to hunt for our ethical *differentia* among the observable facts, we have now another road open to us which may lead

to better results. In its most general statement, the genetic inquiry is interested in ascertaining *how* and *why* the moral facts have come about. Why do we act morally? or, which is the same question, What is morality for? directs attention to the meaning of those actions which fall within the ethical field. Those forms of behavior which, for the actor himself, or for the society of which he is a member and which takes cognizance of his action, have significance, are, from the ethical point of view, moral. We may gather into a single view the varying emphasis of the terms 'meaning' and 'significance,' by saying that morality takes account of social action which is 'intentional.' We do not, of course, mean that morality must wait upon a developed will, or that freedom is the necessary condition of a moral life; what we mean, rather, is that conduct, in the sense of moral behavior, and in contrast to social action, is that kind, or class, or type of social action which results within the social body, upon the supervening of conditions which become operative with the moral act itself. In this sense, we may say that moral actions are 'instrumental' because they constitute part of the conditions of their own fulfillment. With the other genetic question, namely, How do we behave morally? another set of considerations comes into view. In this preliminary statement we cannot do more than indicate the character of the answer which later pages will develop. It will, however, be seen, at the outset, that psychology must provide the insight by which to find our way to a satisfactory reply. For if we substitute for the question as it was just stated another, namely, How do we come to intend? it is clear that the psychology of intention lies at the root of ethics looked at from this point of view. The subject will be discussed with greater fullness in the chapters on motive, but we may anticipate, what must be left till later for detailed proof, so far as to say that, as providing a test of morality, the genetic inquiry into the *method* of the moral life supplements and throws light upon the test provided by the other inquiry into its *raison d'être*. For if from this latter standpoint we may say that *we must intend our meanings*, or, what is the same thing, *we must plan the consequences of our own actions*, if what we are and what we do are to be ethically



appropriated; from the other standpoint we may say that *those forms of behavior are moral which are mediated by those forms of feeling which are capable of the widest socialization*. When taken together these constitute a single test which makes it possible to escape the failure of historical ethics on the one hand, and the barrenness to which we are condemned by the professional sociologist, on the other, without either giving up the conception of ethics as it has been defined through the great systematic thinkers, or disputing about rights in a common territory with those who have recently settled among us. This is a great gain ethically and socially. It is certainly encouraging for our further study of genetic ethics, which is the working out in detail of this conception.

Several lines of remark are necessary at this point to remove the possibility of misunderstanding. The first relates to the character of the genetic inquiry itself. It may be said, for example, that the questions *How?* and *Why?* presuppose the existence of morality as an already constituted fact, and that, therefore, the whole discussion of its *differentia* is merely an academic affair. This, we may point out, would be no less true if we had raised the definitively structural question—*What?* There is, as we said in the first chapter, no dispute as to whether there are moral facts, nor indeed is it a matter of the uniformity of moral judgments; for ethical science, from whatever standpoint it is cultivated, finds its *point d'appui* in the world of ethical facts and relations which, without ado, it takes for granted. But just as it is one thing to be in a world and to form part of its moving active life, so is it another—quite another—to have an intelligent understanding of it. Ethics does not create the world it seeks to understand. But while this is obvious, it should be remarked that our understanding is commensurate with our knowledge of *what*, essentially and characteristically, the world of moral facts and relations is. But this is only to say that science, as a method of its own advance, requires tests which it can intelligently apply, and by means of which it collects its appropriate data. What morality is, therefore, is a question of prime importance if and when the scientific interest is controlling. The only point of the text is that the genetic questions provide us with the only answer to this inquiry which does not beg the issue. For if we consider the type of ethical theory which defines morality in terms of the end of moral action, it is

not clear why pleasure, or happiness, or goodness should be the objects which are supreme over all others, even if we overlook the defect of not telling us what pleasure, what happiness or what goodness it is which is morally worthy. And if we appeal to conscience, or free will, or a moral nature, we are still left without an objective standard of morality and—to start with—we really know no more about conscience, or free will, or a moral nature, than we do about morality.

The reconstruction which ethical science has to undergo when its material is considered from the genetic standpoint makes it frequently necessary to refer to the positions which have been developed in the history of the subject in what may appear a disparaging way. We are, therefore, all the more ready to acknowledge points of agreement when they occur. It is also important for the proper understanding of the field of genetic ethics that we should call attention to the fact that, however far its two main questions seem to be from the historical development of the science, they in reality, but in a new form, attach themselves to the two types of theory which we referred to above. It was said that the statement of the *summum bonum* in terms of an end gives us what may be called an objective morality, and that a subjective morality results from a reference of the supreme good to the constitution, in whole or in part, of the moral subject. We have these same general distinctions combined in a unitary way, and, as was said, in a new form, in the test which is defined in the answers to the two questions Why? and How? For when we ask, Why do we act morally? we wish to know what morality is for. In other words, we are looking for a definition of morality in terms of its results. What the results are at different levels of the moral life we shall see, but the general statement, which covers the whole variety of facts throughout, may be made that morality is effective for the *maintenance and development of social life*. The *terminus a quo* and the *terminus ad quem* we thus see are to be found in society. This being so, the answer to the other question, How do we behave morally? requires an analysis of the means that society has for the control of its members in the interests of the group. This is obviously an inquiry analogous to that which gave rise, historically, to the various objective theories. And from this point of view it is obvious that the individualistic must give way to a social interpretation of the moral self. The moral situation, as we shall see, is not a matter of the individual *vs.* society, or of society *vs.* the individual, nor yet does it appear as society *vs.* society,—all these ways of representing the facts are more sociological than moral—but

it requires that these contrasted pairs be taken together in such fashion that, even in their opposition, they are embraced within a more comprehensive whole, without which no opposition, or agreement, or any other moral relation, would be at all possible. This, however, is the object of the next two following chapters, and to them we must look for the detailed development of the position indicated.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE MORAL IDEAL.

The definition of ethics as the 'science of what ought to be,' emphasizes the ideal aspect of the moral life. The way the ideal is brought to the front varies, not only from author to author, but from age to age. Sometimes it is presented as a ready-made law, indicted by the finger of God, as, for instance, the Mosaic Decalogue; sometimes it is expressed as a vague overshadowing, never-to-be-defined Idea which gives reality to all that is real and meaning to everything that has existence, as, for instance, Plato's poetic conception of 'the good'; sometimes it is placed before us in the life and character of some historic figure, as, for instance, the Synoptists' portraiture of the person of Jesus. Under a variety of forms, and from different standpoints, we are constantly reminded, by those who are interested observers of human life, that there is a discrepancy between what the race actually does and what it might accomplish, between its realization and its possible achievements. In the last analysis, the purpose which the ideal in any system serves is to show men their own measure and to generate the means for its proper fulfillment.

The moral ideal may be looked at in another way. It is part of any ethical system, because it is first part of the moral facts themselves. The way this impresses itself is as varied as are the practical motives which control human conduct. It may appear in the demand of a naturalist for free-will in the human subject,<sup>1</sup> or in the every-day struggle of man to enlarge his clearing and gain for himself a larger outlook, or in the heroism of the widow who gathers

<sup>1</sup> This illustration was suggested by the remark of a positivistic colleague who asserted that "we've *got* to maintain the freedom of the will or all morality will go to pieces."



her children about her at the last extremity and dies rather than pay the price of public charity. The seasons in their course emphasize, now in one way and now in another, the reality of the things that are not seen; and the history and literature of the world are full of the same thought. In these and countless other ways, in all that most practically concerns us, are we reminded of an ideal which shapes our course, and leads us on to an end that is not of our own choosing. Call it Fate with the ancient Greeks, call it Providence with the old Semites, call it Illusion with the pessimists of all ages and races, call it God with the Christian under a thousand skies, there is the same fact beneath the change of name, and we cannot if we would get away from the feeling that human life rounds out to ideal results.

Such reflections as these might be indefinitely prolonged. We have said enough to indicate the truth that in practice we are all agreed that "man does not live by bread alone," and that life's values, for every one of us, are found in 'the heaven-drawn picture.' It is only when we come to take an intelligent interest in this phenomenon, to make clear to ourselves why it is, and to try to explain how it is, that a babel of sound breaks upon our ears. Yet it is to this task of understanding the moral life as an ideal striving that we are now to turn. We put it in the forefront because it is the most common and universally characteristic thing about the moral life. Here we find the sap which gives life to root and stem and branches, to leaf and flower and fruit. In one way and another the ideal makes itself manifest, sometimes in simple form, sometimes in more complex, but there is no moral life without it. In this sense it is true, as Ladd has said, that "no one who is not an idealist can possibly be a good man, can even know what kind of a reality is meant by the very word 'goodness.'"<sup>1</sup> It would seem, therefore, that before entering upon a study of the several aspects under which the moral life develops, we should

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy of Conduct*, p. 651. The entire work may be read as a detailed confirmation of the position thus stated, but see especially Chapter XXII on 'Idealism in Ethics.'

come to an understanding of the nature of the ideal as in very truth fundamental to every ethical inquiry.

We may give brief attention to two typical ways in which the ideal has been regarded and in so doing we shall the more clearly realize the impossibility of further research along either line. For convenience, and as expressing their affiliations, we may designate them the theological and the naturalistic tendencies respectively. Each of these general views is interested in the question of definition; their object is to tell us, from their respective standpoints, *what* an ideal is, but both end in stating *where* the ideal is to be found. Thus, according to the one, it is essential to the character of an ideal that it should be objective in the sense that it maintain an existence outside the individual consciousness which, as ideal, it is to control. According to the other view, an ideal which does not form part of the constituent facts of consciousness, which does not find its place within experience, and, therefore, is not subjective, is no longer an ideal. What of truth there is in each of these views we shall preserve in our own genetic statement. For the present, it is worthy of remark that between these two accounts, we are face to face with a dilemma which, indicative of the moral situation of the day, effectively destroys the value of the ideal for human life. For if, following the theological view, the ideal is objective in the sense demanded by its advocates, namely, that it exist before and in independence of the human characters it seeks to develop, then the problem is to see how it can be brought into any sort of effective relation with human life without losing, thereby, its objectivity. If, according to the naturalistic view, the ideal like any other fact about which we can discourse is a fact of consciousness, then it is difficult to see how it can be ideal if this requires its extra-conscious existence. Hence, if the ideal is objective, in the sense acknowledged by the one view, it is incapable of affecting human life; if it is subjective, in the sense of the other view, it is no longer ideal.

The method which underlies each of these views, however different their standpoints, is the same. Each undertakes to construe life from an abstract point of departure. Life for both

is a static conception, and what we know is what happens at finite moments in finite spaces. This is obviously so of naturalism. It is not so clear of supernaturalism. But when we consider the two views, the only difference we find is that the one is, or aims to be, a thoroughgoing monism, and that the other depends for maintaining its distinctive features on a no less thoroughgoing dualism. But between a naturalistic monism and a supernaturalistic dualism the only difference is one of more or less explicit knowledge of controlling purpose. For the religious and even the ethical life, dualism may serve as a general scheme of arrangement, a descriptive device, but when it is constructed into an ethico-religious philosophy it runs off into a reasoned confession and justification of our ignorance of the only object which is of importance for the ethico-religious life—the knowledge of God. This is a statement of historical development, and Dean Mansel's book on *The Limits of Religious Thought* is our historic example. But granted agnosticism of the type in question, to what view of life are we scientifically bound? The argument for naturalism is victorious, unless from dualism we can advance into some higher form of spiritualistic monism.<sup>1</sup> Now the method of naturalism is essentially that of the physico-chemical sciences. It involves interpretation in terms of preceding change of the same order. It implies uniformity of the material and the lawfulness of its changes. But it is because uniformity and law, in the meaning of those terms held by naturalistic science, are not predicable of the moral facts that the ideal is eliminated from all consideration. But is it any more comprehensible from the other point of view? We think not. For as an explanatory science supernaturalism breaks down just where as a descriptive science it has the larger outlook, even as naturalism succeeds as an explanatory science when it fails to grasp the totality of the facts with which it deals. We submit, therefore, that it places the moral life in an equivocal position when, between these two views, we are driven either to deny its distinctive characteristics, or to admit that it is incapable of rationalization. Still, unless we can advance beyond these points of view, a choice between these two possibilities has to be made. And when it is put in this bald way, we naturally fall

<sup>1</sup> This progression into a monistic conception of the universe which shall give the rights of mind due recognition is the distinguishing feature of Ward's contention in *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, second edition, 1903.



back upon the facts even if we cannot understand them. This is the position held in common by the church theologians of a particular type, and by the class of writers of whom Kidd may be taken as representative. They both agree that the ideal interests of life can never be given a rational sanction.<sup>1</sup> But this means that we must give up the attempt to understand, to explain, and that ethics, æsthetics, and natural theology must content themselves with *describing* their respective phenomena because they can never develop instruments for the control of them.

We have seen that naturalism either forces ethics to give up the ideal or reduces it to impotency in face of the demand for explanation. These conclusions, as we have suggested, are due to the failure to ascertain what should properly be understood by the term ideal. The result, however, should not come as a surprise to those who have followed the discussion of the previous chapter. There, it was pointed out that the direct method of approach through more than twenty centuries failed to produce any illuminating answer as to what the *differentia* of ethics is. Following the same ethical tradition, we now find that when the subject is changed, and we inquire what is meant by the ideal which acts as the *motif* of improving moral conditions, neither naturalism nor supernaturalism enables us to say. The one declares that it is, but cannot tell how it is; the other affirms that it is a figment, and therefore need not be taken further account of. But in spite of the agnosticism of the one view and the dogmatism of the other, the common sense of mankind holds its course by "the light that"—according to both—"never was on sea or land," and is making history by the faith it has in the ideal which, as was said, is either unknown or non-existent. If, then, we would study the ideal, and at the same time do justice to each of the views referred to, we must come back to the concrete facts of experience, to life as it manifests itself in the complex relationships defined by our intercourse with one another in the various theoretical and practical

<sup>1</sup> In theological literature this appears as a doctrine of the 'Divine Decrees.' For Mr. Kidd's statement we refer to his *Social Evolution*, Chapter III. Here belongs also Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics*.



interests of the family, the business, the society, etc. But the recognition of this implies more than a compromise between the naturalistic and the theological theories; it requires the adoption of a scientific<sup>1</sup> temper and method, and a reconstruction of the problem itself. Only a careful and exact study of the facts of life can solve the questions that life itself suggests. We are led, consequently, to a consideration of the relationships in and through which the ideal arises and undergoes development. These relationships are, of course, those that are designated, broadly, as social. An accurate social psychology, which is essentially a genetic psychology, must underlie any adequate philosophy of the moral relations.

We, therefore, raise the two definitively genetic questions, and these will guide the discussion in this and the next chapter. In this, we shall be concerned with, How the moral ideal comes to be. We shall be disappointed if we are left in the dark as to what an Ideal is. To find this will be the positive gain of this chapter. In the next chapter, we shall endeavor to ascertain, Why there is an ideal at all. The reward we may look for in this connection is that we may gain some needed insight into the nature and relations of the moral self.<sup>2</sup>

We turn, then, to inquire, How there comes to be a moral ideal. The question of fact concerning the existence of the ideal is not, as we conceive it, involved in the scope of the present chapter. What can be demanded in a preliminary way in this connection we have aimed to meet in the foregoing pages. There is, indeed, no more need to raise doubtful and preventing questions concerning the fact of morality than there is concerning the fact of the physical world. That we act upon the assumption

<sup>1</sup> The term 'scientific', as used here, is intentionally broader than the term 'naturalistic.' It is an interesting *petitio principii* that makes them synonymous.

<sup>2</sup> We shall meet the same genetic questions in other of their aspects when we come to the moral motive, for the problem of motive is, How ideal considerations operate to bring about moral results.

of both a physical and a moral world, and that this assumption works is all the proof or demonstration of the fact which is necessary for advancing to a better understanding of both our physical and moral relations. There is no better reason for doubting and questioning in the one case than in the other. Doubts and questions there may be in their proper place; but doubts and questions which empty experience of its whole content is a proceeding which reduces the world to zero and leaves no room for their own existence. This is an irrational and suicidal procedure, and unless we are willing to begin with the results of the historical development, in the form of tradition or of experience, there is no possibility of advancing to a comprehension of the world, physical or moral, in which we live. Much more to the point is the inquiry into the *status* of the moral ideal? That cannot be illusory, however much reconstruction it may have to undergo, of which some systematic account can be given. The rights of the ideal have to be investigated as the condition of determining either its reality or its nature. To this inquiry we shall in the main confine ourselves in the present chapter.

Although the subject of our inquiry is the *moral* ideal, there is a sense in which this is not distinctively an ethical question at all. It is true that in ethics we are interested to know what are the principles which control the organization of life so that it has that special quality which makes it the subject of moral judgment. Ethical science, like all science, has its distinctive subject matter which it seeks to understand. But it is a mistake to suppose that it differs from all the other sciences in the fact that its method is unique. It would be nearer the truth to say, because it is the same human mind which is at work in the ethical field, that the procedure of inquiry, in its main outlines, must be the same as that which is illustrated in any of the other lines of scientific research. The possibility of the application of the various methods of knowledge are limited, *ceteris paribus*, only by the nature of the material of the several sciences. When, therefore, we raise the methodological question—the question of how knowledge gets built up—there is one generalization which applies to all knowledge, namely, that the

progressive ascertainment of truth is possible in so far as there is at work within the sciences a constructive ideal which not only points out the goal of knowledge, but controls every step of the way toward it. We cannot, that is, separate the investigation of the moral ideal, because it is *ideal*, from the broader questions which have a distinctively epistemological character.

Failure to recognize the unity of method which belongs to all human knowing has reacted unfavorably upon the conception which has prevailed of the science of human conduct. Unnecessary ambiguity is introduced, for example, when ethics is classified as a normative science. The *motif* of this description no doubt lies in the desire to give to the facts of the moral life consideration independently of the conclusions which have been reached in other branches of philosophical inquiry—hence the term ‘science’—and yet to preserve the ideal facts and relations in which the moral life centers—hence the term ‘normative.’ With both these objects we are in unequivocal sympathy. However, it may be questioned whether the disadvantageous consequences of this terminology do not outweigh whatever initial advantages it may possess. For we may ask what are the positive features which entitle ethics to be called a science. Are these to be found, for example, in its subject matter, or in the method which it employs? The same inquiries may be urged with respect to its normative character. Now there seems to be a general agreement among those who adopt this terminology that by ‘normative’ a reference is made to the content of ethical science. Thus Mackenzie writes: “The fact that ethics is concerned with an end or ideal or standard serves at once to distinguish it from most other sciences.”<sup>1</sup> He goes on to point out that ethics, as thus understood, is one of a group of similar sciences which, under the generic term normative, he defines as “the sciences that lay down rules or laws, or, more strictly, that seek to define a standard or ideal with reference to which rules or laws may be formulated.”<sup>2</sup> With this Seth, who draws the same distinction between natural and normative sciences, seems to be in agreement. Some confusion is occasioned in this writer’s account by the introduction of this topic in the chapter on the ‘Method of Ethics,’ and ambiguity of statement and implication is more or less conspicuous throughout; yet if we read to the end of

<sup>1</sup> *Manual of Ethics*, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.



the discussion, we are told that "It is merely the difference in the subject-matter that I have desired to assert and emphasize."<sup>1</sup> If, now, we ask what is the method of normative ethics thus defined, Seth states a position with which we heartily sympathize. He says that "the distinction between normative and natural, or appreciative and descriptive, sciences is not intended to imply that the method of the one group of sciences is in any respect different from the method of the other. The method of science is always the same, namely, the systematization of our ordinary judgments through their reduction to a common unifying principle, or through their purification from inconsistency with one another. Whether these judgments are judgments of fact or judgments of worth, makes no difference in the method."<sup>2</sup>

The result, therefore is this: that as *science* ethics is one with all the other sciences in its employment of a method which is common to all the sciences, and that as *normative* it differs from the other sciences, as they differ from one another, because of a distinctive subject-matter.

Now with respect to this statement of position one or two things may be said. If, for example, we are to call ethics a normative science because it studies a norm or standard, there seems to be every reason why we should designate the other sciences also, according to their subject-matter. The demand for this is partly met when these other sciences are grouped under the general term 'natural science.' Hence the distinction between natural and normative science is based upon the classes of fact which are studied respectively by each. It becomes a question, however, whether we should not then extend the latter term to include all the philosophical disciplines. Not to press this point, we meet a more serious difficulty in the fact that the natural sciences are sometimes referred to as 'positive,' and are contrasted to ethics, for example by Mackenzie,<sup>3</sup> as if the implications of 'natural' and 'positive' were the same. Now, a science is positive not because of its subject-matter, but on account of its method; but as was pointed out, the method of ethics and the natural sciences is one and the same, and, therefore, it would seem that ethics is as 'positive' a science as any of the others with which the term 'normative' is supposed to put it in contrast. All that we wish to insist upon is that terms to be serviceable must have a fixed meaning, and that they be

<sup>1</sup> *Ethical Principles*, fourth edition, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> *Manual of Ethics*, p. 20.



capable of retaining that meaning so long as the subject to which they are referred remains the same.

We should like to see the term 'normative ethics' retired from current use because, in the hands of those who adopt it, it refuses to be tied to an unchanging meaning. We may refer, then, to the changes of emphasis and significance which come about when this term is put into the service of ethical science. Seth<sup>1</sup> would make the distinction between natural and normative sciences the basis of a natural and a normative science of ethics, the former being propædæutic to the latter. By a natural science of ethics he means an investigation of "the causation of morality, the uniformities of sequence which characterize moral antecedents and consequents as they characterize all other phenomena." Such a science would give "the natural history of morality," and would be "the *sine qua non* of an intelligent interpretation of its significance, the indispensable preliminary to its reduction to ethical system." Let us look at the several points of this statement *seriatim*. First we may consider the distinction between a natural and a normative science of ethics. This is supposed to be a particular application of the distinction between the two types of natural and normative science. A science, that is to say, is natural which has for its object the study of nature; just as that science is normative which has for its object of study one of the ideals. Can we say that a science belonging to the latter class can also, without change, form one of the sciences of the former class? Can we say this, so long as we remain with the definitions by which they are distinguished? On these premises it is difficult to see how there can be a natural science of ethics at all. For if by morality we mean the organization of human relations under an ideal of goodness, and it is this which forms the contrast to the facts of the natural sciences, no possibility remains of identifying ethical and natural phenomena; there can be no natural science of ethics. If there is, therefore, to be such a science, the premises require a subject-matter different from that which belongs to normative ethics. Let us see what the author says concerning this, so called, natural science. It is, he remarks, an investigation of "the causation of morality, the uniformities of sequence which characterize moral antecedents and consequents." It is an investigation of the 'causation,' the 'uniformity of sequence' of the moral facts. Now this can be understood only on the supposition that these terms indicate a new subject-matter. To make this clear we have only to ask

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Ethics*, p. 27.

if the investigation of the 'causation of morality,' that is, its 'uniformity of sequence,' may legitimately mean, what before has been unequivocally affirmed as the proper task of ethical science, the investigation of the ideal of morality. If it should be replied that the problem is an inquiry into the 'causation of the ideal,' we should have to reply that the term causation is equivocal, and that moral can never be equated with physical causation since it has not to do, as the author uses the terms, with the "uniformities of sequence which characterize moral antecedents and consequents." Evidently, then, the characteristic feature of the moral life has been emptied out in the attempt to differentiate between the two sciences of ethics, with the result that no one would care two pins about this so called *natural* science of ethics.

Let us look, second, at the normative science which perhaps may afford compensations. Fruitless expectation; for if the attempt to make of ethics a natural science has involved a transformation of its subject-matter, the defense of its normative character involves a transformation of its method. That method was identified by Seth with the one common method of all the sciences, and it was said to consist in the 'systematization' of moral judgments. In the passage immediately before us we have instead of this the substitution of 'intelligent interpretation.' In the same paragraph normative ethics is said to be "the effort to determine the meaning or content of the facts" of morality. Now the 'intelligent interpretation,' that is, the determination of the 'meaning' of the moral facts requires, not the method of science, but the analytical and critical method of philosophy. But, as we remember, it was for the purpose of studying ethics apart from philosophy that, at the outset, it was called a normative science.

In view, therefore, of these remarks we may say that ethics (1), in so far as it is a natural science, is not ethics; and (2), in so far as it is normative, it is not science, but philosophy.

What is the conclusion of the whole matter? Obviously, we think, that under 'normative ethics' are included incompatible factors which make it impossible to render a consistent account of the moral life, and which, therefore, introduce confusion without any compensating advantages. The contrast between natural and normative is fictitious, and had better be discarded. Indeed, this suggestion is but a little more thoroughgoing than would come from those who acknowledge it to be a relative distinction. Thus, from this point of view, Mackenzie writes that "the distinction between positive and normative sciences is one that may require, to a large extent, to be thrown aside as the student advances. It

is one of those convenient distinctions . . . . . which require to be drawn at the outset, but which may be gradually superseded."<sup>1</sup> We think, however, that it is, on the contrary, an inconvenient distinction, and had better not be drawn. The science of ethics, as we have defined it in the previous chapter, will then be left to share the field with the philosophy of ethics, and we shall be saved the waste of energy involved in the attempt to explain the moral life under a form which, because it is neither science nor philosophy, introduces an initial squint which renders most doubtful all the conclusions to which we may subsequently come.

If then, as we hold, the discussion of the moral ideal is one with the discussion of the ideal wherever found, it will contribute to our present purpose to indicate, in a more general way, how the organization of knowledge proceeds. In both the theoretical and practical life we have a series of problems presented for solution. It is the fact that our effort to know and our effort to do are frequently hindered that constitutes both spheres interesting and stimulating. Without this embarrassment, unless our endeavor were temporarily thwarted, there would be no discipline and no progress. Now discipline and progress are commensurate with our ability to handle and to invent tools for doing the work which lies before us. Efficiency is everywhere correlative with both these requirements. When, therefore, we consider the situation with a view to summing up the various aids which are accessible for these ends, education will, in large measure, appear as a means for making available the tried and experimentally proved instruments by which the bulk of the common tasks of the world may get done with the greatest economy and efficiency. Racial experience has made a social inheritance possible, and it is through our endeavor to appropriate this inheritance that we come more and more into harmony with our kind, and receive the discipline without which it is impossible for us to contribute to the world's advancement. This is true whether we have regard to the intellectual or to the ethical spheres of life. Language, history, mathematics, science are, in this regard, on a level with obedience, justice, truthfulness

<sup>1</sup> *Manual of Ethics*, p. 20.



and benevolence. The lesson that each has to teach is learned when we find them instrumental to the theoretical or practical problems we are called upon to solve. No one of them terminates upon itself, but upon the peculiar difficulties which confront us as members of a changing social order.

Reference may be made to Baldwin's discussion of 'Social Heredity' in which the emphasis is laid upon the reciprocal action of the individual and society with a view to show how the social factors get control, and how instead of becoming a private individual the child becomes a social person.<sup>1</sup> Our purpose in the text is to describe what may be called a functional situation, not its *modus operandi*.<sup>2</sup> How the common tradition gets appropriated may not be, as Baldwin holds, a matter of imitation, for imitation may be nothing more than a descriptive term for the fact which is to be explained. But that there is a common tradition, and that it is there for the purpose of directing and controlling the individual in his social adjustments, all are agreed. This tradition is embodied in our knowledge of various sorts, in literature, art and religion, in social customs, conventions and prejudices, in the organized activities of school, business, amusement—in short, in any and every form which common interests assume when sufficiently specialized to rank as 'institutions.' Now when the individual is in process of acquiring the 'tradition' of any one such 'institution,' or is in process of being assimilated by the group, we have what may be termed a functional situation, and in such a situation must be found the instruments through which tradition is handed down and made. In this view, knowledge and practice are seen to be alike in this, that they involve the appropriation of already established reactions, the learning of common modes of behavior.<sup>3</sup>

From this standpoint we may indicate the common origin of our various ideals, and point out the conditions which make ideal developments possible. Phylogenetically, it may be said that ideal

<sup>1</sup> *Social and Ethical Interpretations*, fourth edition, pp. 66-73.

<sup>2</sup> This question is considered below in the chapters on the moral motive.

<sup>3</sup> The question of the modification of common habits in the process of acquisition is omitted here for simplification: we take it up later on.



control is demanded when empirically given data are no longer adequate or available for the purposes of life. This certainly cannot be before the dawn of imagination, a term which we use in a broad sense to embrace the whole representative side of consciousness. The function of imagination, however, is not different from that of perception, since both are to be regarded as instruments for the control of distinctive situations. Now, perception and imagination are psychological developments which are determined by the growth in complexity of our individual environments. They are the means through which we come to a mastery of our determining conditions. If looked at more closely, perception and imagination will be seen to differ in the kinds of control they exercise, and this corresponds to a difference in the kinds of situation in which each becomes functional. Perception puts a premium upon the permanent, the unchanging, the always-the-same, and it acts as a selective principle in emphasizing those environments in which the objects and relations are stable and dependable. For perception, objects and their relations 'stay put.' This is the broad common ground which underlies all science and philosophy, the root from which those other functions which are necessary to the building up of knowledge springs. Imagination, on the other hand, originates when some of the elements and relations of our perceptual world which are important factors in solving presented problems appear under conditions which do not admit of appeal to the concrete data which perception supplies. Instances, of this may be seen when we have lost our way, or when we wish to reach a distant point under the darkness of night.<sup>1</sup> Without growth of imagination through which the missing links may be supplied and grafted on to the presented material no solution would seem to be possible. The same problem is ours in those other cases in which we are not able to eliminate from the environment the changing, unstable elements and relations. Here, we have to do, not with things, but with persons. In

<sup>1</sup> For further illustrations from child life, cf. Major, *First Steps in Mental Growth*, pp. 231-233, 235-238.

this case imagination gives control over the shifting forces of the situation which, in this way, receives fitting resolution. For the development of imagination, therefore, it would seem that we require an environment which makes demands upon the conscious subject for the supply of some of the factors through which it is to receive its further determination. Imagination thus comes to be looked upon as the instrument through which ideal elements are introduced into our concrete, problematical situations for the purpose of overcoming their equivocal status.<sup>1</sup>

In the light of this brief statement, what is meant by an ideal may be made clear. The above line of remark indicates that the term stands for a function of the process of knowledge irrespective of the character of the material with which knowledge is dealing. It is primarily an epistemological concept, and its validity in any case depends upon its methodological fitness. The same truth may be stated another way. If, as was said, the ideal is a term by which we describe a general characteristic of knowledge, then knowledge is essentially a process of idealization. But, further, if knowledge be divided into kinds—popular, scientific, philosophical, religious, etc.—then we may look within each of these fields for different ideal constructions in which we piece out the fragmentary data which give us the starting points of our cognitive and practical endeavors. No progress in knowledge or practice, however, can take place unless, through imagination, we can construct those factors of control by which there eventuates a reorganization of experience. From this side, and in a general way, we may define the ideal as any content of experience which serves as a means for the growth of experience at the same time that it determines the direction in which growth takes place.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller discussion of this subject by the writer, cf. 'The Genesis of Ideals,' *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods*, Vol. III, pp. 482-495, and in the same *Journal*, Vol. IV, pp. 342-356, 'Suggestions toward a Psychogenetic Theory of Mind.'

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 245, note. "It will be understood that by an ideal object is meant an object present in idea but not yet given in reality."

With this view of the ideal in mind, we shall glance at some of the topics within the field of ethics for the purpose of defining more specifically the qualities of the ideal which morality seems to imply.

We may at once connect this definition of an ideal with the distinction between social and ethical phenomena. In a former chapter we undertook to determine the respective fields of sociology and ethics. Here it is only necessary to point out that it follows from what was there said that the moral ideal cannot be considered merely as the product of the social factors. Sociology, as we understand it, is concerned with the description of the forms of human organization with a view to a statement of the relations which obtain between their several members. It was, we opine, the mistaken view that you could equate a sociological and a moral relation that led many honest men to defend the enslavement of the Negro within the Constitution of the United States. Sociology is interested in what is; but what is, is not, simply because it is, moral. But when we say this, we do not deny that morality is a social concern. What we doubt is that social relations constitute morality. The truth rather is that morality forms and transforms the relations which men sustain to one another in society in so direct and vital a way, that without morality no permanent social organization would be possible.<sup>1</sup> But if this is so, we must look beneath the institutions of society for the qualities which give concreteness to the moral ideal. And for the reason that institutions undergo changes which frequently have no reference to the ideal through which originally they came into existence. Or, as Sorley says: "Civilization transforms all things, obscures their origin, and may even invert their uses."<sup>2</sup> What, therefore, requires to be done is to inquire into the conditions of the foundation of institutions; what were the

<sup>1</sup> See Ladd, *Philosophy of Conduct*, pp. 537-551, for a treatment of this topic.

<sup>2</sup> 'Ethical Aspects of Economics,' *International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. XVII, p. 438. Cf. the saying of Jesus, 'Your fathers stoned the prophets and ye build their sepulchres.'



needs to be met, and the satisfactions to be secured through these forms of corporate existence. This also the sociologist claims to do. But even so, the result is the same as before. Sociology remaining in the realm of determinate fact, does not answer the moral question. Thus the principles which determined the organization and operation of the Ku-Klux may be accurately ascertained, and yet the morality of the organization remain an unknown factor. That there is an ideal of some sort in all social organization is beyond question, but whether in any case it is a moral ideal cannot be decided merely by stating that it is. Nor are the social psychologists in any better case; for merely to show how beings organized as man come to take interest in things common is simply to generalize the sociological problem, and to refer our human associations to laws of the associated individuals. What ethics requires, when genetically studied, is that we be able not merely to state what is the organizing principle of our social institutions, but to show that this principle is maintained throughout the life of the institution as a standard of reference for all the members of the group.<sup>1</sup> Hence we may say that social phenomena are moral when the functional situation, which is, of course, an undetermined social relation, provides or initiates the means by which the maintenance and development of society are made possible. Thus the moral ideal is a social principle consciously functioning for a common end throughout the whole extent of the group in which it comes to clearer articulation.

The same conclusion may be emphasized with greater definiteness from the standpoint of what we may call the moral situation. In a moral situation we have the control of one individual or group of individuals by another individual or group of individuals with a view to effecting results which include, within the limits of the functional situation, the interests of all. In relation to the moral ideal, this conception refers, for the meaning which

<sup>1</sup> Primitive morality, e. g., is identified with public habits. For remarks and cases bearing on the position of the text, cf. Westermarck, *Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*, Vol. I, pp. 118-124.



that term is to bear, to the wider issues of social coöperation. Hence we may see why it is that there is no morality of the *status quo*.<sup>1</sup> Yet there have been those who have identified the right with whatever is.<sup>2</sup> From various cultural epochs this sentiment comes down to us in varying phrase: *Vox populi, vox dei*; God is on the side of the largest battalions; the majority is right. From the moral standpoint, these and all similar expressions are true only in their converse forms. Thus, *vox populi, vox dei* is true only when *vox dei, vox populi*; God is on the side of the largest battalions only when the largest battalions are on the side of God; the majority is right only when the right gets itself expressed in the will of the majority. That is, there is always a reference in the moral judgments of mankind to an ideal which the moral judgment aims to bring to bear upon the concrete particulars of social life. This control is sometimes exercised in the moral community by the individual and sometimes by groups of individuals, but in either case what gets done, if it is moral, is never identified with the will of the one against the many, or *vice versa*, but is always the concrete embodiment or expression of an interest which includes the partial interests of the parties in the functional situation.

In his restatement of the Utilitarian position, J. S. Mill undertook to do justice to the demand for a standard which should not

<sup>1</sup> The reason for this is that there is no change, no contrast between present attainment and future possibilities. Eliminating the ideal and all knowledge and all virtue cease. Without pronouncing on the metaphysical position of such writers as Bradley and Taylor, it is readily seen that if and when reality and knowledge, goodness and morality, are in accord, as supposititiously they are in the Absolute, there can be no longer any knowledge or any morality. The Absolute, in this view, is *the Status Quo*. For a statement of this position cf. A. E. Taylor, *The Problem of Conduct*, Chap. VIII, Beyond Good and Bad. Various motives have influenced writers to deny 'goodness' to God, and the interested reader may refer in this connection to the position of Descartes.

<sup>2</sup> This, we take it, is the ethical implication of the political doctrine of *Laissez-faire*. Its formula would be: Whatever is, is right.

confuse the higher and the lower with the greater and the less in the moral calculus, as the older Hedonism undoubtedly did. There are two lines of remark, the one referring to the extent and the other to the content of morality, from our point of view. With reference to the extent of morality, it is to take the moral life in a half-hearted way to say that the 'greatest good' extends only to the 'greatest number.' The 'greatest number' is an uncertain quantity which, in any given case, may vary anywhere from fifty-one to ninety-nine per cent. of the individuals concerned. Three remarks seem pertinent with reference to the extent of morality in this connection. (1) As to our available means for determining percentages in this class of subjects. Obviously, our only method is statistical, and our tables have to be compiled with reference to specific kinds of conduct which are regarded as good and bad. Here, of course, we must fall back upon the register of the police and criminal courts, and the various penal and reformatory institutions. If the majority, on this view, are outside the jails and other places of detention, the *summum bonum* is in good standing in the community. (2) It follows that only statutory crimes are wrong. This is the view which Hobbes developed in the *Leviathan*, and it gets popular expression in our own day in the contention of the *soi-disant* socialist who holds that it is government which makes wrong-doing possible. From the standpoint of the enlightened moral sense of to day it may be said that, so far from government creating evil or making the conditions under which it is possible, political organization never has been, and is not now, fine enough an instrument for the detection of the worst forms of moral injustice. It is only the more obvious, the grosser and more easily detected forms of crime which can get entered upon the criminal registers. In the moral sense of mankind, the legal discrimination against the person in favor of property is the most immoral thing about statutory morality. (3) The limitation of morality to the 'greatest number' implies, further, that only those who keep the laws, are moral. This is not only an unnecessary but harmful limitation of the scope of morality which reacts unfavorably upon the meaning of the term itself. But this is the second of the two questions referred to above. On the Utilitarian view, the moral is the useful. But, as has been pointed out by others, the useful emphasizes the conflict between the individual and society, a conflict which, it may be said, it is the business of morality to overcome. Morality is, indeed, nothing else than the reconciliation of the conflicting interests of the individual and society. My interests and society's are not, in morality, radically

different. But if they are so taken, we are reduced to that conception of morality which confines it within legal limits. To obey the laws then is to be good. Hence the criminal because he is a breaker of the law is, *ipso facto*, outside the pale of moral consideration. Consequently punishment, whatever the form it may take, is not and never can be reformatory. In view, however, of the advancement made in modern criminology, advancement due to the introduction of ethical considerations, Utilitarianism is in principle condemned.

A further implication of the moral situation, as it was described above, and so far as it bears upon the moral ideal, is that not only does the moral ideal conserve the interests of all the members of the moral community, but it is that to which the conflicting interests within the community are referred when they get a moral solution. Conflict is incidental to moral progress, but it is not essential to the moral *status*. When one considers the subject of morality historically, it is not possible to be blind to the fact that development is conditioned upon the shifting back and forth of the moral elements around a more or less definite point which secures to the situation whatever stability it may possess. Opposition and stress between sections of the community can be regarded as moral phenomena, or as contributing to the advancement of the moral life, only by being referred to an ideal which each singly but imperfectly expresses. This, we think, is a description not merely of what we would wish to be the case, but of what actually is the case in all moral differences. No enforcement of private ends which does not make appeal to, and gain support from, the conception of an inclusive good could by any possible mischance get recognized as moral in even the most primitive society. Whether the appeal is to the Chief, or to Fate, or to the Majority, or to God, in every moral issue there is involved some form or other of an ideal which is conceived of as involving the interests of the whole, and as conditioning the variations which are possible within the moral community. Unless this were so, we should be warranted in refusing to regard it as a *moral* issue. So we may say that, however intimately connected development may be with the fact of conflict, development is itself a moral



phenomenon only when the strife through which it is brought about is determined by the ideal which conditions the permanency of moral organization.

Whether we shall ever realize a moral society from which all progress and, therefore, variation, is eliminated, may be a matter of doubt or of belief, according to the value of these attitudes for the individual himself. It may, however, help to strengthen the position which has been stated if we bring it to bear upon what, in some respects, is the foremost question of our present social organization, namely, the relations of capital and labor. The conditions out of which the problem arises intimately affects not only the employer and the employee, but all classes of the community which are, directly and indirectly, dependent upon the use to which capital of any sort is put. It is this relation to the good of all which brings the dispute within the province of the ethicist, and it is this which enables him to point out the impossibility of reaching a permanent settlement so long as the discussion is carried on as if it were merely a matter which concerned the two main parties to the dispute. Quite prevalently the justification of such a view starts from some general abstract statement of a so-called law of supply and demand, and of a no less general and abstract principle of right by which it is intended to put beyond question that the laborer and the employer of labor are to be upheld in trying to get all they can for their particular commodity. Granted these premises, and social warfare inevitably results. In view of this conflict of interests, it is the business of ethics to point out that there has been omitted from consideration a crucial element—the whole within which the strain falls, and in relation to which the conflict may be seen in its proper perspective. It is not going outside the bounds of sobriety to say that the laborer is no less offensive a person morally than the capitalist when he regards life as an opportunity to get all he can out of his fellows and when he uses every means which the changing conditions may afford for his own private advantage. In view of what the moral situation involves, we may say that whoever does not bring his interests into relation with a common and inclusive interest is not a good man.

Some inkling of the truth of this is beginning to appear. A most noteworthy example is the resort to arbitration in the settlement of economic disputes. Arbitration is the recognition of the right of the community on its negative side. It is a means of protection against the evils of lockouts and strikes. But even yet our social rela-



tions have not become so thoroughly moralized that we are ready to admit that our business, the means by which we earn a living, is a social function, and that, therefore, society is concerned in the use we make of the organized instrumentalities within our particular calling. This is seen in the fact that arbitration is a matter of final, not of first, resort. It is not meant, of course, that disputes are never to be settled between the disputants. We hold that this is the best way of settlement. But in our present social development in which ideal requirements are barely recognized, this is the way in which they cannot be settled. Differences are possible of adjustment that way now; but settlement means a resolution of the strain, and a redistribution of the social forces involving a gain to the whole community.

From these considerations it will be seen what essentially the ethical facts are. They are the facts which are grounded in the nature of man as man. It is true that what man is gets expressed in a variety of ways which are taken as corresponding to a number of different needs. Biological facts and relations, for example, are presupposed in the institution of the family. The demand for the means of subsistence underlies all business. Permanency of conditions in the pursuit, and security in the possession of the rewards of toil are matters of state regulation. The need of coöperation underlies what, in a general way, we call society. In these instances we have a series of needs—biological, economic, political, social—which have become differentiated in the history of the race, and which, in their organized form, react upon the behavior of every one of us in our attempt to appropriate our racial inheritance. These needs in different ways throw light upon, because they grow out of, the nature of man. But while each differs from all the rest, the subject of them remains one throughout. In view of this fact, we may point out that the sciences which correspond to these several needs are sciences on condition that they abstract from the subject the particular qualifications which are here in question. None of them is definitely a science of man. Biology, for example, is a study of the structure and function of living organisms. Economics is a study of the conditions and laws of trade. Politics is

a study of the principles of government. Sociology is a study of the structure of social groups. But when these sciences take, each one of them, a single predicate, and finds in the group of interests indicated by it the subject matter of its inquiry, it loses, and is bound to lose, the concreteness of the actual relations in which these interests exist in the organized life of the community. Ethics has no protest to enter here. It recognizes that these sciences must necessarily be abstract. But what ethics claims is her right to read the relation in the other direction, and to find the principles of her interpretation of the concrete social relationships in the nature of their subject. Is man determined by the biological, economic, political and social conditions which the corresponding sciences describe, or are the biological, economic, political and social conditions determined by the nature of man? In the one case, man is no more than the logical subject of these groups of interests; in the other, he is the real subject in which is to be found the key to their interpretation. The predicative sciences start out with ignoring the personal and the relations which are founded in the personal, but it is just this class of relations which is important from the ethical standpoint. It is in bringing conduct under principles which are explicative of these relations that ethics finds its *raison d'être*. Whether I am a tinker, tailor, soldier or sailor is, in the main view, quite a subordinate consideration in morals; but what is important is that the gentleman, apothecary, plowboy and thief are men, and that the concept man involves a whole system of relations which are determinative of typical modes of behavior. From this point of view, ethics may be defined as the endeavor to determine the kinds of behavior within the various trades, professions and other social organizations when regard is had for what it is right for a *man* to do. The forms of conduct may vary from one group to another, but the principles which are regulative, from the ethical standpoint, are not derived from the material of these groups, but from the nature of the subject which remains the same throughout all the groups.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE MORAL SELF.

The moral ideal has been spoken of as coming to expression and as being developed in the complex relations, practical and theoretical, which are determined by the existence of the moral situation. We also said that, as ideal, it operates as an epistemological instrument for overcoming the tensional character of such situations. These statements are capable of more precise explanation; but, as an introduction to the subject of the present chapter, we must first safeguard them from misinterpretation. We may, therefore, point out that we may hold these positions quite independently of any ethical or epistemological theory. From the point of view we are cultivating, ethics is a systematization of the facts of the moral life and of their relations. It is possible to describe the moral ideal as an epistemological instrument because it shows itself in this character in the moral experience. For in every moral experience we find that the ideal is brought to bear upon the moral problem only as what ought to be done is made explicit as the result of reflection upon the courses of conduct in which the moral situation may issue. Unless one knows what possible forms the moral ideal may assume in any given case, one will be at a loss to know, in any verifiable way, through what methods of control to shape and direct conduct toward moral ends. If, therefore, the practical life to be lived worthily must be lived rationally,—and to be lived rationally it must be brought under ideal control,—it is of the highest importance to develop a reflective intelligence as the fitting instrument for the expression of the ideal and as the medium of its control.

For the earliest statement of a view similar to that of the text we may refer to Socrates' doctrine that 'All virtue is knowledge.



This position was taken by the great Athenian as a protest against the Protagorean skepticism of his day, on the one hand, and, on the other, against the indifferentism of the Sophists in matters of practical life. The doctrine accredited to Protagoras that 'Man is the measure of all things' had resulted in the denial of the universal factor in human knowledge; and extended by the Sophists to the practical relations, it resulted in the view that there was no appeal beyond the pleasure of the individual. When, therefore, Socrates announced that 'All virtue is knowledge,' he reclaimed for reason its rights to reach conclusions which were valid in one department of interest, in that, namely, which centered in the practical life. Against the Sophists, this amounted to the assertion that virtue could be rationally defended. But more than this was meant. In the end, the Socratic teaching came to the point of identifying virtue with knowledge; so much so, indeed, that the essential nature of vice was to be found in ignorance. Now the grounds upon which this position was held were in the main two. The first was that without right thinking it is impossible to know what right action is. The second was that all knowledge is pragmatic in the sense that it is a determination of the (real) subject in the direction of its object. To know what is right, therefore, implied (1) a dialectical determination of the right in which we get beyond the concrete particulars of the given situation to its underlying principle or ground, and (2) the direction and control of the individual by the good as it had been brought by reflection into definition in human knowledge. The good is regarded as expressing itself in the reflective consciousness of men, and as shaping their conduct to ideal results.

We may broaden out these considerations to show that there is no ground in modern opinion for supposing that the moral ideal, because it is epistemological, is shut up within the limits of theory, or that we are thereby necessitated to a subjective view of morality. We need not take sides on current philosophical controversies to maintain that knowledge is real in the sense that it is, in some meaning of the term, a transcription of the actually existing system of things. Knowledge and reality sustain reciprocal relations: knowledge implicates reality; reality correlates knowledge. These positions belong to the common body of ascertained truth. Theory and practice are not foreign allies whose common interests are only temporary. What is true for the one can never be misleading



for the other. It is, consequently, not possible to maintain that, because knowledge is theoretical while conduct is practical, the two may glide by without coming into actual contact with each other. There are occasions, of course, when knowledge and practice do not accord, but that is because the one lags behind the other either in its ascertainment or in its actualization of what is true. We need not, nor do we contend that theory and practice develop *pari passu*; the fact is quite to the contrary, and there are large arrears on the practical side of life. All this may be admitted. But so far from being a distressing consideration, it is the condition which makes the appearance of the moral ideal possible, and which enables us to apprehend it as a principle of larger comprehensiveness which, whenever the moral question is raised, is constantly saving life from issuing in fatuity. For, let it be said, this principle is epistemological because it goes ahead of conduct for the purpose of shaping conduct, and so getting itself wrought into the social texture of our human institutions and the relations which they imply. It is, therefore, as objective as the moral situation itself.

Epistemology has sustained such close relations with psychology that sometimes it has been considered as having the same limitations. This is seen as clearly as anywhere in the discussion of the principles of knowledge. For what are these principles if they are not processes in finite human consciousness? If, therefore, they have this humble and circumscribed origin, how can they be used as giving access to the objective and universal factors of knowledge simply by giving them the name of epistemology? Hence the question of the transcendence of knowledge, of the ability of knowledge to reach out toward and to make connection with reality, has always been more or less a crucial test of the success or failure of any particular theory of knowledge. The same limitation is naturally thought to adhere to the moral ideal when it is said to be a principle of knowledge. But are we so sure that the difficulty is a real one? Is psychology voiceless in regard to what concerns the objective world of fact? Do we find that the individual mind is without windows, like a Leibnizian monad? There is much in modern psychology, especially in modern social psychology, to warrant a negative reply to all these questions. Much as we think Baldwin errs in the range of application which he con-

ceives imitation to have in mental development, it is a pleasure to refer the reader to his two volumes<sup>1</sup> as a sustained argument against the atomic view of the mind—a view from which the difficulty connected with the objectification of knowledge has for the most part come. Social psychology has, through this writer, spoken a strong and lasting word which saves much time from answering vain and useless questions. Individual psychology also has given its testimony to the objective character of psychic processes. From this side, and as expressing what seems to be the facts of the case, we may say, with James, that there seems to be “in human consciousness a *sense of reality*, a feeling of *objective presence*, a *perception* of what we may call ‘something there,’ more deep and more general than any of the special and particular ‘senses’ by which current psychology supposes existent realities to be originally revealed. If this were so, we might suppose the senses to waken our attitudes and conduct as they so habitually do, by first exciting this sense of reality; but anything else, any idea, for example, that might similarly excite it, would have that same prerogative of appearing real which objects of sense normally possess.”<sup>2</sup> Now, whether with James, the psychologists refer the objectivity which is characteristic of all knowledge, in its more elementary as in its more complex forms, to a general ‘sense of reality’ through the arousal of which all that is acknowledged as real gets recognition in human cognition, or whether, with Ladd,<sup>3</sup> they refer it to a ‘belief in reality’ which for psychology is ‘an unanalyzable, inexplicable datum,’ the fact remains that psychology is not content to, nor does it end its labors with the description of mere subjective processes, but finds in the state of cognitive consciousness, as part of the facts revealed to introspective analysis, the implication of the real which has its counterpart in the field of epistemology as a principle of transcendence. Neither in psychology nor in epistemology, when regard is had for what is common to the two sciences, are we shut up to the flow of individual ideas which receive no direction from or give no support to the facts which constitute the world of reality.

To what has been said, we may add that, in the absence of definition, the term ‘objective’ is very liable to be equivocal. The more immediate meaning which it is most likely to convey is

<sup>1</sup> *Mental Development*, third edition; *Social and Ethical Interpretations*, fourth edition.

<sup>2</sup> *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> *Psychology, Descriptive and Explanatory*, pp. 520–522.

connected with the fact that we are accustomed to call the contents of our perceptual experiences 'objects.' 'Objective' will then come to mean 'possessing the quality or characteristic of objects.' And when we ask what this quality is, the psychologists have with undeniable unanimity told us that 'objects' are 'given'; that although, within limits, I may determine whether I will have any particular object, yet when I do have it I cannot deck it out in any form I please, but must have it as it is presented. It has, therefore, come to seem that in perception we have a process which makes no difference to the thing perceived, which then appears as quite independent of the stages through which it comes to conscious recognition. We are not, of course, saying that this is an adequate psychology of perception; but that, because this was the current view of perception, the term 'objective' came to be attached to anything,—object, idea, purpose, etc.,—which could put forward a claim that it was not constructed in the process by which it came to be known. Thus, for example, God was conceived of as objective because He was supposed to be *presented to* our inner sense as the material world was to our outer sense. Hence when we speak of the moral ideal as objective, it would naturally follow that we must mean that it too is a 'datum,' and it seems very like a contradiction to undertake a genetic account of what, from this point of view, exists independently of the processes through which it is known. The contradiction may be partly overcome, if not avoided, if it is remembered that this is not the only, even if it is the most obvious, meaning of the term in question. No psychologist would deny the facts on which the view we have stated relies, but it might be suggested that they were capable of a different interpretation. Thus it might be argued that psychology is concerned with finite human experiences and not with any absolute experience, and that objectivity, if it is to have any ascertainable meaning, must find that meaning in the qualities which such experiences have or in the functions which they serve. It was, as we pointed out above (p. 42), the taking of the ideal as an independent reality by the opposed theological and naturalistic schools that made it impossible for either to come to any conclusion as to what the ideal is. If we are to avoid the snares which were there exposed, we shall have to seek for our interpretation of the ideal in the experiences in which it is made known; not in an absolute experience, but in finite, dependent experiences. When, therefore, the ideal is declared to be objective, what we must mean is that it is no private or merely individual affair, but shows itself as that which gives a public reference to all private or individual thinking



and doing. If given a logical statement we should call it a form or category under which we group what is common, what is neither yours nor mine, but what is ours.<sup>1</sup> It is the 'common' conceived of as giving the law to what may be truthfully conceived and rightfully done. Now, about such a conception, two things may be said. The first is that, as common, it must have originated, as all other categories have, out of the menstrium of a social experience. However we interpret the term social, whether as inter-subjective discourse, or as mere difference in unity and permanence amid change, there is no possible meaning for the term apart from such facts as those to which these alternatives point. What, therefore, we mean by calling any situation objective is that there is a shared medium for the expression of our meanings, apart from which they could have no common or public reference. The 'objective' is whatever may be taken for granted in our social relations, whether of thought or of action, that our individual differences may be made explicit and brought into a measurable degree of accord. It is, therefore, that in which our differences terminate and are brought to their fulfillment. The second remark is, that in the interest both of truth and practice, it is important that what is common, whenever possible, be allowed to detach itself from the circumstances in which it originated, and to operate, as a movable idea, in any situation in which it is capable of providing a clue to further meanings. This, of course, is only the process of generalization or abstraction applied to our concrete theoretical and practical life. But, on the other hand, generalization is only the statement of what takes place whenever one experience is a guide to the meaning of another. From this point of view, an ideal appears as a detached and movable idea which is capable of further utilization in those situations which are, intellectually and morally, baffling. Now, for ethics, such ideas have their embodiment in social institutions—social institutions thus appear as concrete realizations of the ideal. But, as we maintain, it is primarily with the ideal and not with the institution that ethics has to do. In view, therefore, of these remarks we can see how it is that, though objective, the moral ideal functions within the moral situation to bring about those results which are in harmony with the principles which the moral ideal expresses.

<sup>1</sup> For a treatment of the idea of social commonness from the logical standpoint, cf. Baldwin, *Thought and Things*, Vol. II, Chapter III, §§ 8 f. and Chapter VI.



So far in this chapter we have been concerned to show that, when duly considered, the statements and conclusions of the last chapter do not raise problems which entangle the subject, nor do they evade questions which it is desirable to have answered. But as leading out into the discussions of the present chapter, we may put into a definite statement what seems warranted in view of the indications these remarks contain. This statement will be a reply to the second of the two genetic questions which above (p. 45) was announced for discussion. The answer to this inquiry, as was intimated, will tend to bring out the objective features of the moral life as it centers in the moral ideal. For when we ask, Why is there a moral ideal? we are raising the question, What is the moral ideal for? Now, obviously, this is a question of fact and not of theory, for the moral ideal is for what it actually accomplishes; its function is to be interpreted in terms of what it characteristically does. The question, therefore, is whether it can be shown through appeal to recognized moral data, that the moral ideal, as now defined, does anything which in its absence there is no reason to suppose would be done at all. And we may reply that *the moral ideal operates in definite moral situations to define the principles, or to set forth the objects which are to get realized through the thinking and doing of the individuals who compose these situations.*

If, as we have seen, the moral ideal is a principle of larger comprehension within which our partial attitudes, as they get expressed in social organizations and conventions, are capable of receiving moral valuation, it would seem necessary, unless the concreteness of these definite interests are to dominate, as they do in so much of human life, that the moral ideal must find some way of coming to objectification and of making itself part of the facts which are to be brought under control. We do not see how this requirement is to be met apart from the recognition that the ideal develops with the development of the rational and emotional life of the individuals in and between whom the moral situation gets its definition. For what we must recognize is, that it is the vague and stumbling, or the clear and self-conscious, grasp of a *plan* of action, in which there is involved the coöperation and subordination of a number of one's fellow men, that constitutes the way of

advance as it is written in the history of the race. It is not those who feel that something ought to be done, but those in whom that something has come to definite formulation who are the spiritual leaders of men. The prophets of all times and places, like the prophets of Israel, have spoken definite messages 'in the name of the Lord.'<sup>1</sup> The nastiness of our modern industrial conditions,—although in this they do not seem to differ from the conditions of other times,—is to be found in the fact that men have not the courage or the wisdom to connect their commercial enterprise with ideal ends. This may be because ideals have nothing to do with these particular enterprises. But it is a peculiarly irrational and morally irresponsible position which holds that any human interest can escape moral valuation, or that any human being or group of such can engage in a line of work which is closed as a means of expression to the moral ideal. It may be, without question, that those engaged in these enterprises are so taken up with their details that they have no time or thought for their administration in the interests of human advancement. But as we have seen, morality is a function of humanity, although humanity is too often a 'sleeping partner' in the concern. If, however, the moralization of the businesses and professions is to become an accomplished fact, it can be brought about in no other way than as the moral ideal is realized in the form of a policy which makes conscious recognition of the larger whole within which their specialized activities fall.

Two things are involved in our statement of what the moral ideal is for: (1) It provides a type, model or plan of action through the carrying out of which the moral requirements are to be met, and (2) it must do this in such a way that it places the practical energies under constraint at the same time that it is engaged in the task of definition. Some light may be thrown upon both these points by reference to the moral judgment. Now the reason why a study of the moral judgment is able to further our knowledge of the moral ideal is because historically it is the instrument which has

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, they enforce a policy or a duty upon men in the finite conditions which hem them in, which policy or duty is at once the form which the ideal takes and the object to be realized through the control which it is allowed to exercise in the further determination of conduct. The moral ideal is, thus, both a principle and a career. It is the one, because the other.

developed in dependence upon the requirements of the moral ideal. It, therefore, shows to us most clearly the objects which the moral ideal implies when, through the judgment, it gets special interpretation in relation to our concrete moral situations. In view of these considerations, the *moral judgment may be defined as a process of reflective consciousness functioning within a moral situation for the purpose of defining the aims, and of fashioning the instruments by means of which the partiality of our private interests are overcome in a new status which conserves the old while it introduces the new.* It is the practical reason come to its most characteristic expression; and by practical reason is understood reason making a difference in our concrete social relationships. The moral judgment, consequently, presents the moral ideal under two aspects. In the one it appears as efficient cause. Morality generates the means of its own fulfillment. In the other it appears as final cause. Through the moral judgment the moral ideal appears as the end toward which conduct must tend if it is to receive moral approbation; for it is only through the moral judgment that we get the formulation of the goal toward which the situation must grow for its moral fulfillment. In its former aspect as efficient cause, the subject belongs to the chapters on moral motive; in the latter aspect, as final cause, it is our immediate concern.

We have seen that the moral ideal when looked at from the standpoint of the moral judgment appears under two aspects: as a final and as an efficient cause. This distinction has also been connected with those divisions of ethics which, in the historical systems, have set before them the questions of the end and the motive of the moral life. In these systems, however, these inquiries appear in a certain logical relation, but they have not been seen to be grounded, as in truth they are, in the nature of the moral life itself. This is the reason for the difficulty which is experienced by ethicists of all schools when, as all are agreed, the *summum bonum*, or the moral ideal conceived of as an end, presents itself as a *categorical imperative*. Even Kant, than whom no one has had a clearer vision of the unconditional character of the objects which were to be conserved by the moral life, found it difficult to say, and succeeded in giving only a vacillating answer to the



question, why anyone should render obedience to its requirements. Although the difficulties are not so obvious in the case of other writers, they do not succeed any better than Kant in giving an answer that satisfies the moral sense of mankind. For whatever the particular form in which the motive is presented, *unless it is shown to be a function of the end to be attained*, there will always remain the possibility of questioning whether morality is not after all an extrinsic good. The defect of ethics in its attempts to reach scientific precision is, to a large extent, to be found in its unsatisfactory treatment of this problem.

We may now look at the moral judgment as defining the end of moral action a little more in detail. We have seen that a moral judgment is present in every moral situation. Congruous with our present point of view, we may ask: What is it there for? The answer is that it is there for the sake of defining those aspects and qualities of the moral ideal which are pertinent to the concrete conditions which have called the moral situation into existence. Let us illustrate. Suppose my little girl neglects to get her lesson, and suppose that when the duty is pressed upon her she dallies with the task, and gives herself with readiness to anything that offers as an escape from what she does not wish to do. Here we have described a set of conditions which may give rise to, but are not to be identified with, what has been called the moral situation. We have here a social rather than a moral status, and it may be compared with any other conflict of interests. The facts are these: I want something which she does not want either because, negatively, she does not want anything just now that I want—she is in opposition; or because the thing I want cuts across and interferes with something she, positively, wants—a case of conflicting interests. Now without going beyond the facts as they exist, there are at this stage two ways of overcoming the difficulty: either the one or the other may get the right, by the withdrawal of the opposing demand, to indulge his private wish; or resort may be had to compounding the difficulty so that either a half, or some other fraction of the lesson will be accepted, or some reward will be given for the whole lesson. Both of these are non-moral solutions. But the situation immediately becomes moral when it is shown that the



demand and the duty express from different sides some common good which it is the desire of both parent and child to realize, or when one or other of the contrasted and opposed interests can be shown to include the purpose which is involved in the other. Now the point is that what that common good is, either when it lies beyond the conflicting interests or is identified with one of them, comes to definite statement through the moral judgment working within the moral situation, and that it is only when our private interests have been seen in the light of the ideal thus brought to expression that the conditions of approbation or blame are present. What, therefore, the moral judgment may be said to do is to define an object which it presents as a solution of the strain and tension which arise when the partial and finite aspects of an existing social status are thrown into opposition.

The moral judgment, as it figures in the literature of the subject, has been used in a quite too limited and one-sided way. This may be indicated by referring to the predominantly juridical character which it has been supposed to have. The moral judgment, thus, has come to signify the judgment which is passed upon conduct and character with reference to their satisfaction of certain requirements which are embodied in a standard or ideal. Thus Külpe, writing in reference to the task to be assigned to a scientific ethics, remarks that he is "in full accord with Herbert when he says that the form in which morality is first presented to us is that of certain judgments of value passed upon human volition and action."<sup>1</sup> It is this exclusive meaning which makes it possible for some writers to find the rudiments of both the moral life and the moral judgment in the animal kingdom.<sup>2</sup> The consciousness of having rendered oneself liable to punishment or reward may be found both among domesticated animals and among gregarious species of wild animals. The facts do not call for analysis here; it is pertinent, however, to remark that the use made of them by ethicists is warranted only if consciousness of the results of conduct, following the performance of conduct is the *differentia* of moral life. This does not seem to us sufficient or adequate; nor would our objections be met if we found among the more socialized animals an anticipatory consciousness which

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction to Philosophy*, English translation, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Mackenzie, *Manual of Ethics*, pp. 114 f.

exercised an inhibitory restraint upon the individuals' impulses which were thus modified or held in check. In this statement, and in the general position which we take upon this issue, we are in substantial agreement with the view which Herbert Spencer expresses in his *Principles of Ethics*. For there, the conduct which ethics studies is differentiated from the lower and simpler forms of behavior by the fact that it must have a conscious social reference, and the subordination of one feeling to another, in which is found the essential trait of moral consciousness, must be consciously brought about.<sup>1</sup> To bring this in line with the nature and purpose of moral judgment, it is clear that the moral judgment must serve some other end than that which the prevalent view assigns to it. We do not, of course, deny that the moral judgment is concerned with valuating forms of conduct with respect to whether or not they are concrete realizations of the ideal. But our question is whether the judgment which, either in advance of or consequent upon action, places an estimate upon that action as it does or does not conform to the ideal, is to be considered as primarily and characteristically moral. This is the common ethical tradition. As one writer puts it: "Ethical judgment *is* an adjudging of the 'right,' or the 'wrong,' to conduct and to character. Such are the words which carry in them the subtle essence that is distinctive of the result in which all the powers and processes of human intelligence express themselves, when they combine to form an ethical pronouncement."<sup>2</sup> Right and wrong are, thus, the predicates which properly belong to every moral judgment. But 'right' and 'wrong' are ethical ideals, and, as we have pointed out, the chief question not only for the ethical theorist, but in moral practice as well, is how we come by these conceptions—and, if we were concerned with the philosophy of ethics, what is the ground of the right which moral ideals claim to exercise in human affairs—through which we are enabled to call one thing good and another bad. It is not to be supposed that this question fails to receive consideration by ethical writers; but, as a rule, the formulation of the standard of judgment has no more to do with the judgment which applies the standard than, in theory, the legislative has with the judicial branches of a democratic commonwealth. What we hold is that the moral judgment is primarily legislative, a view which, historically, is associated with the name of Kant. For us, and from the

<sup>1</sup> Spencer, *Principles of Ethics*, Vol. I, pp. 8-20, 102-131.

<sup>2</sup> Ladd, *Philosophy of Conduct*, p. 65.

genetic standpoint, the moral judgment appears as a constant function of the moral situation for the purpose of bringing the moral ideal to more definite expression and realization. The fact is that we do not know and can have no conception of any moral ideal which does not come to us embodied in some moral situation.

There results from the same view of the moral judgment, namely, that it is concerned with the application of moral standards, some ambiguity with respect to the moral categories. The vocabulary of morals contains two pairs of terms for the expression of moral worth. These are right and wrong, good and bad. It is an interesting question whether these terms have any distinctive signification. Ladd, in the same paragraph from which we quoted above, asks: "What is it that human intelligence can do, with all its wonderful development in comparison with the lower animals, of the distinctively and uniquely moral sort? It can form and apply," he replies, "the category of *Right* to conduct and to character. In all his ethical judgments . . . man can use the predicate of rightness (or its opposite) to characterize to himself and to others the peculiar marks whose significance the science of ethics investigates. Judging what is right and what is wrong, man is uniquely a moral intelligence."<sup>1</sup> The same author's treatment of the good and the bad may be stated briefly. "Every form and degree of what men call either good or bad," we are told, "has reference to a state of sentient and conscious life . . . There is no good that is not a good which is serviceable for or actually realized in some condition of a Self."<sup>2</sup> And when the question concerns the good as an end in itself, it is said that "the distinction between good as means (instrumental good) and good as an end . . . is of comparatively little assistance in determining the essential nature of the conception,"<sup>3</sup> and the reason is that "the stage of morality in distinction from custom considered as mere fact, is not reached until pleasure-pain states of consciousness cease to be regarded solely as ends in themselves, and come to be regarded also as means related to the attainment of another kind of good."<sup>4</sup> Now, with the general sense of these statements we are in accord. It is true that man does, when he exercises his faculties in a uniquely moral way, (1) form and (2) apply the category of right.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.



But it is a little uncertain what is meant by saying, as Ladd has said, that the moral intelligence consists in "judging what is right." Are we to understand this in the sense of forming the concept of the right, or in the sense that through judgment the concept is applied to a specific piece of conduct? In the former case, "what is right" means 'what ought to be done.' In the latter, it is the determination of moral behavior in its relation to a standard of 'right.' Now in the latter sense we can not, with a strict regard for the meaning of terms, rightfully employ the term 'right,' because as the author tells us the term 'good' stands for what is "serviceable for or actually realized in some condition of a Self," and, in this case, it is "some condition of a Self" which is the subject of the judgment. But if we take the other meaning of the statement, it cannot properly belong to the sphere of ethical judgment, because we have been told that the ethical judgment is concerned with the application, not with the formulation, of a standard of conduct and character. Evidently, then, we shall have either to enlarge our definition of moral judgment—and this is what we have been arguing—or to deny that moral judgments can ever reach scientific precision. What seems to be the fact is that the moral ideal shows itself both in the principle of the judgment which issues in the conception of what is right or wrong in the given case, and also in the degree in which approximation is made toward maintaining in conduct and character the requirements which have thus been made explicit. But in the valuation of conduct and of character we are dealing with the moral facts under the categories of good and bad. The good and the bad are distinguished from the right and the wrong in fulfilling different purposes of the ideal. And in the one case as in the other the moral judgment serves to bring the goodness and the badness, as well as the rightness and the wrongness, to explicit recognition. In both these forms, and as issuing in each of these categories, the moral ideal functions through reflective consciousness for maintaining and developing the moral life.

Let us now glance back upon our discussion of the moral ideal for the purpose of gathering together its various topics, and as a way of approach to a further question connected with the problem of the moral self. In the last chapter we found that we come to the recognition of the moral ideal because and when the moral life presents itself under a principle of control in relation to which the concrete particulars of our social relationships get their sortings



and systematization. This principle we have said is properly called epistemological; and, at the beginning of this chapter, we carried the exposition far enough to show that this description did not prejudice the rights of the moral ideal in respect to its objectivity. For when we asked the second of the two genetic questions under which the moral ideal was to be studied—the question, Why we have a moral ideal?—we found that no answer was complete which omitted reference to the fact that the ideal becomes objective in the moral situation. We do not know anything of a moral ideal which comes to us in any other way than in the moral experience. It is in that experience, when reflectively considered, that we arrive at the statement of what the ideal is. Leaving aside the other purpose which belongs to the next chapter and which concerns the development of the instrumentalities through which the moral ideal gets its way in human affairs, we may now ask whether it is possible to generalize the problem and to state the permanent qualities or purposes which the moral ideal, as moral, is particularly interested to conserve. What we are asking is, whether, in all the various ways in which the moral ideal gets verification, we are able to say what the constant purpose is in the interest of which it exercises control in every moral situation. Can we state what are the qualities which the moral ideal, as such, may be said to have, and, therefore, what the objects are which it purposes to bring to concrete realization in human conduct?

To this question a direct answer may be given, an answer which is foreshadowed in all our previous discussion, and which will receive confirmation at every step we take toward the end. In its most general statement, the answer may be given in this form: The qualities which the moral ideal may be conceived to have are those which it possesses when it manifests itself in its completest development. Now, unless it is held that types never become fixed under finite conditions, this does not mean that they can never be known. What it does mean is that when the 'kind of life' which, for us mortals, centers in the moral ideal becomes explicit, we have the means of ascertaining the objects which are set before us for realization. Here, then, we may emphasize, what cannot be over-

emphasized, that the qualities of the moral ideal *are* the objects of moral endeavor. But the objects of moral endeavor are quite unknown unless we can state what are the qualities of the moral ideal, and this we cannot do unless we can say what kind of life that term connotes. Is this possible? We think it is. For unless ethical doctrine is deceptive at the point where ethical teachers agree, we may say that the moral ideal presents itself most concretely to reflective consciousness as a moral self. From the standpoint of moral principles this is so, for if we bear in mind the practical character of moral principles the moral self appears in the forms in which these principles get organized as working instruments for the furtherance of the moral life. Hume, therefore, is right in both statements when, speaking of moral principles, he says they are "social and universal; they form, in a manner, the *party* of humankind against vice and disorder, its common enemy."<sup>1</sup> The '*party* of humankind'—that is what the moral ideal is; but so long as it remains a matter of our theory only, it can never become '*party*' to any of our practical concerns and, therefore, can never show itself in its most concrete form as a moral self. For by moral self we can only mean a self which has become efficient in the life of the world for the maintenance and development of those interests with which morality is identified. And with due consideration we shall see that moral interests may be summed up under two leading conceptions which express not only the qualities but the objects of a moral self. These are personality and individuality.<sup>2</sup> We must, therefore, give ourselves to the elucidation

<sup>1</sup> *An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morality*, section ix, part 1, p. 114. Open Court edition.

<sup>2</sup> The '*personal*' and the '*individual*' are terms used in this work to indicate what, in popular language, we call personality and individuality—conceptions which, as they are usually employed, have no clearly defined or exclusive meaning. They receive consideration in the following pages. It may be well to indicate here that they are both held to be social concepts, and that they differ in respect of the functions they discharge in the social group. The '*personal*' lays emphasis upon ideas and methods that are common and shared; it is the medium of what is traditional. The '*individ-*

tion of these conceptions before considering the means that are employed for their realization in human society.

The facts which these conceptions generalize have been recognized not alone by the professional ethicist or philosopher, but by social reformers as well. The reason for this is clear if, to consider the latter case, the social reformer, in distinction from the demagogue, is a man whose propagandum is grounded in clear, if sometimes limited, moral insight. A conspicuous illustration is found in the work of Mazzini, the pioneer prophet of modern Italy. He writes: "Life is one: the individual and society are its two necessary manifestations; life considered singly and life in relation to others. . . . The individual and society are sacred; not only because they are two great *facts* which cannot be abolished, and which consequently we must endeavor to conciliate, but because they represent the only two *criteria* which we possess for realizing our object, the truth—namely, *conscience* and *tradition*. The manifestation of truth being progressive, these two instruments for its discovery ought to be continually transformed and perfected; but we cannot suppress them without condemning ourselves to eternal darkness. We cannot suppress or subalternize one without irreparably mutilating our power. Individuality, that is to say, conscience, applied alone, leads to anarchy; society, that is to say, tradition, if it be not constantly interpreted and impelled upon the route of the future by the intuition of conscience, begets despotism and immobility. Truth is found at the point of their intersection. It is forbidden, then, to the individual to emancipate himself from the social object

ual' indicates ideas and methods which while still social in their origin lie beyond the personal, and mark out the way for future progress—either through modification of existing organizations, which are thus brought to fuller development; or through the establishment of new organizations in which these ideas and methods, when once they have become accepted, must themselves be referred to as 'personal.' This twofold movement of the 'personal' and the 'individual,' which is continually going on in every community, is the basis of our view of ethics as a science which studies the moral life from the points of view of its maintenance and development.



which constitutes his task here below, and forbidden to society to crush or tyrannize over the individual.”<sup>1</sup>

In the same way as Mazzini, Baldwin contrasts the individual with society, and considers them as the particularizing and the generalizing social forces respectively.<sup>2</sup> There is, we have said, agreement concerning the facts: life does present itself, at any selected moment, as the resultant of forces which pull in contrary directions. In tradition is embodied the tested and experimentally proved modes of reaction in the line of which it is safe for any one to shape his course. In novelty, on the other hand, we have the results of experiment, the trying out of new ways and modes of behavior. These are often opposed; they are certainly contrasts. But whether opposed or contrasted, it is questionable whether we do not miss something of their *moral* significance when the conservative elements are grouped together under the term ‘society’ and placed over against those which are, or appear to be, disruptive. For the fact may be and no doubt is, as Baldwin’s usage indicates, that the *individual* is a social force. But if that is so, we miss the ground of contrast between the two sets of facts, because the other term—society—cannot be construed without including the first factor over against which, at the start, it was set. We should also doubt the propriety of calling society a social force, for society is only our term for summarizing the relations which individuals sustain to one another, *irrespective of the character of those relations*. Thus, it might be doubtful upon Baldwin’s principle, viz:—that it is a generalizing force, whether or not the family, for example, is rightly considered as a society. It cannot be unless we are blind to the fact that family life is the one social group most liable to differentiation. Other features may show themselves in some families all the time and in all families some of the time, but the family as an institution presents to its critics a wide variety of facts of the opposite kind to point their conclusion. As one has said: “The modern writers who have suggested, in a more or

<sup>1</sup> On the Condition of Europe, *Essays*, Camelot series, p. 286.

<sup>2</sup> *Social and Ethical Interpretations*, fourth edition, pp. 462–484.



less open manner, that the family is a bad institution, have generally confined themselves to suggesting, with much sharpness, bitterness, or pathos, that perhaps the family is not always very congenial. Of course the family is a good institution because it is uncongenial. It is wholesome precisely because it contains so many divergencies and varieties. It is, as the sentimentalists say, like a little kingdom, and, like most other little kingdoms, is generally in a state of something resembling anarchy. It is exactly because our brother George is not interested in our religious difficulties, but is interested in the Trocadero Restaurant, that the family has some of the bracing qualities of the commonwealth. It is precisely because our uncle Henry does not approve of the theatrical ambitions of our sister Sarah that the family is like humanity. The men and the women who, for good reasons and bad, revolt against the family, are, for good reasons and bad, simply revolting against mankind. Aunt Elizabeth is unreasonable, like mankind. Papa is excitable, like mankind. Our youngest brother is mischievous, like mankind. Grandpapa is stupid, like the world; he is old, like the world.”<sup>1</sup> Now if we consider these relations, all of which are what Baldwin calls ‘particularizing,’ it will be seen that the family, as an institution, falls to the side of the ‘individual,’ and, on account of the relations involved, is to be contrasted with what he calls ‘society.’ But, however it may fare with any particular institution, if we follow out the principle of division which Baldwin has adopted as the basis of his distinction between the individual and society we are confronted with a dilemma; for if this distinction rests upon the nature of the involved relations, then either the individual falls outside society and then he is not a social force, or if he falls within, society includes the individualizing as well as the generalizing social process. The latter alternative seems to us correct. And with this the facts of the moral life are in accord. The social life as moral, that is, as bringing our inter-individual relationships into connection with an ideal

<sup>1</sup> G. K. Chesterton, ‘On the Institution of the Family,’ in *Heretics*, p. 189.

or as controlling them in the interests of the 'party of humankind,' shows these two characteristics because the moral self is the ground of the distinction and at the same time of their reconciliation. If, therefore, we attempt to develop, from the ethical standpoint, the contrast to which our attention has been called, our account will take the form of an exposition of the personal and the individual as ethical concepts. Or if we assume the more dynamic standpoint of experience, we may say that the personal as a generalizing social force, and the individual as a particularizing social force are rooted and grounded in the conception—which, as we have said, is a social conception—of the moral self.

Our study of the ethical problem has served to emphasize the fact that the normal life bodies itself forth as the progressive endeavor to realize, in the midst of time and through the concrete conditions which define our social relations, a something which is not limited in time and is not to be identified with any of the empirical conditions through which the moral problem gets its definition. This fact which, whenever the *moral* life is in question, is quite independent of the stage of cultural development shows itself in a variety of ways at different levels of culture and at the same level of culture according to the circumstances which await moral resolution. Hence we have said, from the psychological standpoint, that the moral person must intend the consequences of his conduct. Now intention is only the psychological term for what, from a logical point of view, we referred to as the moral ideal. The moral ideal gets itself wrought out through intention, and becomes concrete in the conditions which are instituted by the consequences which were involved in the original action. Thus the moral ideal shows itself as a principle of larger comprehension which not only controls the individual actor and those involved with him in the existing situation, but also determines for all concerned future courses of action. But any plan of action which is held up as a personal or individual good must be such that it makes an adequate appeal to those for whom it is to operate as the final end of life. No appeal, however, would be adequate which did not make possible, through the integration of the complex forces of human nature, the highest type of life. Hence the moral ideal must be realized not merely as a regulative principle through which our formal relations are secured a harmonious adjustment, but as a constitutive power in which

is realized the ends toward which the moral life is a constant struggle. Now these ends, both as we are conscious of them in our own moral experience, and as we find them summarized in the highest known development of the moral ideal, resolve into some form or other of selfhood. This is the type of life which the moral ideal in its fullest development expresses. To be a self is the goal of all moral endeavor.

In this connection, we may notice that the problems which the moral life presents vary as one *motif* or another predominates in our study of the facts of that life. Under the psychological interest, it becomes a question, as we said, of intention, and we are concerned with the processes through which meaning is acquired by our individual actions. The entire development of modern psychology, both individual and social, presents this problem in a two-fold aspect in which is emphasized the inter-relationship of the public and private factors which constitute every moral situation. The same combination of elements, only in another form, is given when our study becomes logical instead of psychological. Then the moral ideal works out as a principle of judgment which determines the end and the motive of moral life. And when we come to consider the same facts from a quasi-philosophical point of view, we find them suggestive of the life of a self which shows itself throughout as social, and which gets its characteristic development in the ways in which it relates and harmonizes the divergent tendencies which everywhere are the constant accompaniments or signs of moral existence. These tendencies are, in ethical terminology, the personal and the individual; hence the ethical problem may be presented concretely as the effort to reconcile the claims which are represented by these two terms respectively. All of these statements, psychological, logical, and philosophical, of the problems of ethical science go to confirm our definition of ethics from the genetic standpoint as being concerned with the principles and methods according to which the moral life is maintained and undergoes development.

The personal and the individual are terms which present the most concrete and highly specialized problems with which institutional morality has to deal. The detailed study of these problems is excluded from the present discussions by the limitations which, at the outset, were laid down for our guidance. Genetic ethics is essentially a consideration of the *principles* of the moral life, and only indirectly of the ways in which these principles work



out in our finite human relationships. There are, however, two requirements which must be met and which provide us with the points of view for the examination of these terms. We faced the same demand in our statement of the implications of the moral judgment. It was shown that the moral judgment is a finite process which develops a common or universal meaning. The personal and the individual are capable of being considered in the same two-fold way,—either as a fact of the psychological subject or as a fact of the moral situation. It is the one because it is the other; and it makes no difference to the truth of this from which side the start is made. Hence we may say that the moral situation reveals certain features because the psychological subject possesses certain qualities, or that these qualities are his because the situation has those features. Thus it is as impossible to eliminate morality from the concrete interrelationships of social life merely by ‘psychologizing’ it, as it is to deny the moral efficiency of the agent merely by ‘socializing’ it. The fact is the psychical process terminates in the social life which both controls and is controlled by it. This interplay of so-called ‘subjective’ and ‘objective’ factors—the terms are poor ones—which is recognized in all our modern study of psychology gets its peculiar moral expression in the ways in which the personal and the individual act and react in the moral situation. Hence we may accept these terms as signifying either the qualities of the moral agent through which the objects of the moral life, as expressed in the moral ideal, get realized, or the products of moral effort wrought into and forming the characteristic structure of the moral situation. The latter view is consonant with our present standpoint, and a brief statement will suffice to indicate the general truth for which each term stands. We shall return later to the other aspect of the problem which considers these terms as indicating qualities of the moral self.

We have seen that the personal is a generalizing social force. In it the conservative tendencies of morality are summarized. This is its meaning when the community works upon the subject to make him more and more fittingly the vehicle for the expression



of its own complex life. From the standpoint of the subject, his reactions are mechanized in conformity to a common type. A premium is placed upon certain forms of behavior, through which the will of the society becomes the law of each one's conduct. The more completely obedient anyone becomes the more does he conform to the life he shares in common with others. The structural elements of the group, as a group, operate as limits determining what any one may or may not regard as constitutional in his own behavior. We play the game within the rules. Society, that is to say, functions in the interests of conduct, of the practical life, and against the interests of thought, of the theoretical life. We are kept within the limits of the meaning already laid down in the group life which, as a matter of self-preservation, we are made to share. Severally, we learn, and of necessity have to acquire the ability to express, what is required of us by the wider inclusive social structure which conditions from the start all we are and are to become. Without such predetermination there is not the slightest possibility of anyone existing as human beings are known to exist. This conformity is one of the necessary and inescapable conditions of life. From this point of view we are able to see what is meant by the term personality. To be a person means that the larger life, the common, shared life of the group, comes to a particular expression in each of its members in such a way that the originality of the expression does not subvert, but conserves the fundamental and primary meaning of the constitution which confers the rights, and sets the limits of personal activity.

The other tendency, with reference to any given group, is destructive. In the former case we saw that the interests of society depend upon getting the reactions of its members mechanized to the extent of securing conformity to common types and standards of behavior. Mechanism, from this standpoint, is the end of human life. If this were all, moralists would be justified in seeking a calculus, and determinism would be the only defensible ethical doctrine. From the standpoint of the individual, however, mechanism becomes the means, not the end, of human existence. Thought subordinates to its own uses the social situations which determined

the subject's former relations. It tends to modify conduct by making reference to another set of actual or ideal conditions. Thought tends to carry the subject beyond the limits of the group by developing other meanings than those constitutionally belonging to it; and requiring other forms of reaction than those socially sanctioned by it. In this way may we conceive the principle of individuality to become operative. Individuality consists in those unique qualities, or unique combinations of common qualities, by which one man is distinguished from another in the same social group. In this sense we speak of a 'distinguished man,' meaning what we sometimes express otherwise as a 'strong individuality.' Whichever mode of expression we use, we intend to call attention to the fact that the person in question, in some noteworthy features, is *not* like those with whom he associates. Individuality tends to separation from the class. It is a variation.

In conclusion, we see that the personal and the individual are differentiations of attitude within a given group. Each expresses a distinct relation of the subject to the total complex within which, for the time, he functions as a part. Neither attitude gets its exemplification independently of a social environment as the other term of the relation which, as we have said, each implies. This is readily seen in the case of personality where the subject is taken representatively. So far as this characteristic is concerned, it does not make any difference to our knowledge through which of a given number of subjects we arrive at an acquaintance with the group to which they all belong. Each subject, in this instance, is typical. But the same general fact, although with a different emphasis, is also illustrated by what we call individuality. The relational character is discernible here because individuality involves a contrast which is lacking in personality. The subject, as individual, is reacting, in this case, so as to emphasize differences, not, as before, to maintain similarities. But the differences fall within the group which, as we pointed out, conditions from start to finish the life that human beings are necessitated to live. They are differences because, in short, they imply a reference to the communal experiences which personality most effectively expresses. If the personal

does not, in itself, require the individual, the individual is impossible without the personal. It is, therefore, the more highly developed character. The subject, in this point of view, is atypical. Individuality of action, in the sense explained, is determined by the whole within which it takes place, and expresses the degree to which the group is capable of modification without ceasing to be what essentially it is. The extent to which this is possible is seen when we consider that the common social life acquires a unique expression in each of its members; no one is the exact reproduction of any other; and, consequently, no one is equally representative of the whole within which all find their life. But as showing the relations of the personal and the individual we have only to remark that both are differentiations whose mutual limitations are mediated in characteristic ways through the social *milieu* which provides the proper conditions for the development of each.



## CHAPTER V.

### MOTIVE : THE BEGINNINGS OF MORALITY.

Ethical science has been considered in these pages especially with reference to the facts and relations involved in the conception of the moral ideal. These facts and relations have come to attention and have been discussed in dependence upon the two main questions which the genetic standpoint requires us to raise. One of these questions concerned the method and the other the purpose of the moral ideal. The limitation under which the treatment of these questions has labored is quite obvious, and it has shown itself on the several occasions when we have had to postpone the consideration of certain problems to future pages. The necessity for this is to be found in the methodological requirement of considering distinguishable aspects of a single problem as if they were distinct facts of the moral life. Thus while the question of method was raised when we asked, How the moral ideal comes to be? not all, or perhaps the most vital, truths have received recognition, because the answer had to be found without reference to the influence of the moral purpose on the procedure of the moral life. It may be said that our previous discussion was limited to pointing out the rights of the moral ideal to be, and to be the subject of ethical discussion. This was necessary in view of the good natured indifference with which the mention of any ideal consideration is, in our day, likely to be met. In view of the present attitude toward 'philosophical' studies, what is required is not merely to maintain the possibility of our subject-matter, but to lead the serious student along such paths as will enable him to come to an intelligent apprehension of it for himself. There are, however, other requirements which cannot be overlooked. For it is one thing to see that ideal considerations operate in human experience, and that these

are inescapable conditions of human existence and progress in the moral life; it is another to ascertain the means through which the ideal becomes incorporate in human institutions. For if from the standpoint of historical ethics the ideal is a product of the interplay of various social forces in the community, from the standpoint of the study of ethical principles the relations are reversed, and there is no control of social forces which does not come from an idea of the end toward which social progress should tend, that is to say, from an ideal. But when the case is stated in this way, a distinct problem is forced upon the attention of the ethicist,—and one which has proved, in some respects, the most perplexing with which he has had to deal. For when the moral ideal is taken in abstraction from the conditions which, from the ethical standpoint, it is to control, it becomes a question whether it can ever be brought back again into anything like a working partnership with human life. This, in general, is the question which ethical science has struggled with under the term ‘motive.’ Stated explicitly, reflection on the moral motive raises the problem as to how ideal considerations operate to bring about moral results.

In this connection, motive comes before us as a question of method. We must, however, distinguish the particular applications of method which are here in evidence from those which were involved in the first of the two genetic questions which was discussed in Chapter III. There our interest was with the question in its most general features, and as it enabled us to show the possibility of the fact answering to the conception of the moral ideal. The answer to this inquiry, in its broadest outline, must always be that the moral ideal is not only not contradictory of, but conforms to the conditions which are laid down in the constitution of the knowing mind. The truth is that all knowledge proceeds in the way of ideal construction. The special form it takes in ethics is due either to the material of this science or to the function which it is to fulfil. Thus we may say that we have a *moral* ideal because and when the growing complexity of social relations makes it important to formulate the ends of human conduct. We have a moral *ideal* because and when knowledge becomes of importance in shaping and directing human actions toward an inclusive universality. In other words, we have an ideal which ethics as a science undertakes to construe, and it is moral

because this science is concerned with those types of behavior (*mores*) which have survival-value. When we turn to the other question of method which the moral motive raises, we are not required to show how the moral ideal comes to be constructed, but how human actions conform to its requirements once it is given. This is a much more specific demand, and implies, for its answer, an intimate acquaintance with the laws of psychical behavior. More is required than seems to have been granted by the traditional views which, in a general way, are limited to a doctrine of sanctions.<sup>1</sup> Rewards and punishments may be important incentives and deterrents at certain stages in the development of the moral subject, but they are more legal than moral, and because they operate, for the most part, as prudential reasons they tend, in the long run, to undermine the moral life. Moreover, if the doctrine of sanctions finds its psychological foundation in the theory that all motives are individual pleasures and pains, it is, indirectly, open to the objections which may be urged against the hedonistic position. We shall touch upon the position of Hedonism below; meanwhile it is enough to affirm that the problem of motive is broader than is here premised, and we may meet it best by asking not 'Why do I do the right thing?' but 'How comes it that the right thing ever gets done?'

What must be meant by motive will become clearer if we consider its relations to the moral ideal. The statement of the problem which ethics, from the genetic standpoint, is called upon to consider has made it obvious that apart from the idea of an end to be attained in human conduct, there can be no question concerning the 'motive' of moral behavior. And this is not because 'motive' and 'end' stand for the same fact. It is rather because, as we have more than once pointed out, the end or ideal is made part of the conditions under which human actions, when morally significant, proceed. This has been shown in the statement of what a situation as moral implies. Thus, it may be said that the life history of the individual might be written in terms of the indefi-

<sup>1</sup> For a treatment of the doctrine of sanctions which brings into view some of the problems considered in this and the following chapters, cf. Baldwin, *Social and Ethical Interpretations*, fourth edition, pp. 367-455.



nite number of the circumstances and relations into which he successively came. This is only to say that the environment under which any one lives is a shifting and constantly changing set of conditions. It is probable that no one comes into surroundings exactly similar to those which determine the life of any other, and that there is no repetition of former situations in the subsequent experience of any single member of the race. It would, indeed, be quite possible to draw a picture with all the appearance of verisimilitude which should impress us with the Heraclitean view of human life. It could hardly be overdone, and for the good of morality might be effectively done. For morality has suffered from drab-colored theorists who, in the interests of system, have emptied out all the concreteness of our living experiences with the result of leaving us in doubt as to what it is that all their talk refers. We may, therefore, profitably affirm that the subject-matter of ethics is human life: it is human life in its concreteness, and with its complexity and variety, which is the chronological and logical starting-point of any science of conduct and character. But because ethics has a scientific interest in the facts and relations of human life, it refuses to believe that there is no principle of becoming in the facts of change. For us, the principle of becoming is identified with the moral ideal. For when the moral attitude is assumed the diverse associations are no longer controlling, but become subordinated to—that is to say, get their meaning from—the relations which they are capable of sustaining to an idea of the end which the moral ideal enunciates, and toward which it opens up the way. There is no other condition on which a moral situation can exist. It is, therefore, a development, in theory, of what the moral situation implies when we say that when the moral ideal is made the ‘party of humankind’ in any concrete circumstance or association the problem of motive becomes pressing; for, as we have seen, the question of motive is concerned with the way the moral ideal brings about its own realization in those situations in which it has become functional. From this point of view, the motive may be defined as the moral ideal functioning in human life for its complete moralization.



It may tend to emphasize the view we are advocating if we advert briefly to one aspect of the discussion as that is presented in the historical theories. Etymology would confine the term motive to whatever operated as the essential condition of those actions which are involved in moral conduct. Over large areas of the literature this is the meaning which it has exclusively. Motive, therefore, takes on a psychological character, and comes to be identified with the feelings which determine moral behavior. But etymology is never final for the usage which obtains in any science: it is not surprising, therefore, to find that the exigencies presented by the material dealt with has permitted a somewhat freer interpretation of this term among those who, in the main, abide by its etymological sense. For if ethics has never been cultivated successfully as a positive science, that is, as one in which the causal type of explanation is maintained, the question of the relation of the motive to the contemplated end of conduct must make itself felt, and this must, unavoidably, react upon the original meaning of motive, and stretch it beyond its primitive limitation. So long as this operated unconsciously among writers on ethical subjects, the tendency would be to confusion. It was, consequently, in the interests of clear thinking when Bentham argued that we must distinguish in the motive, not only the feelings but also the end toward which the feelings were directing conduct. To the consciousness of the end in which moral behavior was to culminate, he gave the name 'intention.' This, of course, emphasized anew the original signification of the term 'motive' which then stood for the psychological antecedents—the pleasure-pain factors—of moral conduct. Now, the result of this on ethical theory was two-fold. First, it over-emphasized the hedonic features of the moral life, and, second, by subordinating the realized end (intention) to the satisfactions which the feeling-life demands (motive), it made motives morally indifferent and limited the application of the ethical categories to the consequences of conduct. Thus we meet with the statement that not only must we act according to the strongest motive (feeling), but the resulting behavior is moral only if the results which follow from it are, for some extraneous purpose, useful. Utilitarianism and Hedonism were thus made to appear as mutually supporting and complementary theories.

The historical reaction from this type of theory is to be found in the writings of T. H. Green, who reverts to the more ancient tradition of Aristotle. On this topic he is in agreement with the view which Aristotle expresses when he says that "it is always the

desired end that moves to action.”<sup>1</sup> Not unlike in general purport is Dewey’s more recent statement that “that which is an aim of action must also move to action. There must be an identification of the real concrete ideal with the impelling spring of action. Unless the aim or ideal itself becomes a moving force, it is barren and helpless. Unless the moving force becomes itself idealized, unless it is permeated with the object aimed at, it remains mere impulse, blind and irrational.”<sup>2</sup>

There are certain practical consequences of separating the motive and the end which tend to moral confusion in the practice of life. Their theoretical starting-point may be indicated by the possibility of such questions as these: Can the end remain the same while the motive changes? Can the same motive lead out to different ends? It would not be difficult to illustrate from the observation of current life the effect of an affirmative opinion on both these counts. Thus, if we take the view implied in the first question, we note an indifference to the improvement of the intellectual and moral conditions of one’s fellows, as, for example, in the case of the clergyman who excused himself from ascertaining the assured results of modern Biblical scholarship because, as he said, ‘the Lord knows my intentions are good.’ The implication here is, of course, that it is quite indifferent morally by what route the end is reached so long as that end is a worthy one. There would fall here also all those who, for one reason or another, know no other way of magnifying the ‘soul’ than by entertaining a gnostic contempt for the body. This view is not likely to be productive of any social or economic reforms. In political theory, this tendency runs out into the doctrine of *laissez-faire*. Turning to the other opinion which starts with a single motive and issues in diverse ends, we are introduced to the Harry Hotspurs, if not to the Don Quixotes—to the men and women who entertain worthy aims and have splendid ambitions, but who fall short of good works because the centrality of an abiding motive gets displaced by the shifting impulses which the conflict of ends entails. Stated definitely in moral terms these contrasts become still more conspicuous. If, for example, we take our stand on the side of motive, then, the motive being good, all sorts of overt immorality and practical inefficiency may receive ethical sanction. In its extreme form, this is the condition which breeds the ‘crank.’ If, on the other side, morality is grounded in the intention, ‘the

<sup>1</sup> *De Anima*, III, X, 4, ἀεὶ κινεῖ τὸ ὀρεκτόν.

<sup>2</sup> *The Study of Ethics*, p. 50. Reference may also be made to Wundt, *The Principles of Morality*, pp. 87–91.

end justifies the means' and it is ethically permissible to 'do evil that good may come.' The general result seems to be that a bad motive may condition good conduct, and evil conduct may spring from a good motive. But a view which leads to such consequences is, because of its results, condemned, and our ethical theory needs reconstruction to meet the needs not only of intellectual clearness but also of moral feeling. Whatever the defects of the view which we have put forward, it is not open to the objections which, obviously, belong to the one we have been considering.

We are now in a position to consider what was meant above when it was said that the moral motive must be shown to be a function of the moral ideal if the externality of some of the historical discussions of this subject is to be overcome. The term 'function' is ambiguous. For our purpose we may distinguish two meanings. There is first the biological sense of the term in which is pointed out the fact of use. Function, as thus understood, is to be interpreted through the end which is served. The function, that is, of any particular structure in an organism is the characteristic thing it does. Thus, we breathe through the lungs; the circulation of the blood is maintained through the heart. When we take the organism as a whole the same relation is emphasized. It is, of course, true that the function of the organism as a complex structure of many parts is, in some sense, dependent upon the function of each of the parts, yet the function of the whole is not identical with the functions of the parts in any sense which would make it the sum of these subordinate functions. Life is the term which biologists use to designate, in its broadest sense, the inclusive function of organic beings: through the organism 'life' is maintained. Life is the function which, most conspicuously, is connected with biological existence. When, however, we go beyond this general statement and inquire what is meant by 'life,' we may accept the statement of Spencer that it consists in the adjustment of internal to external conditions. This does not alter the signification of the term function, it only gives it more precise definition by pointing out that 'use' is capable of translation into terms of the relations into which the organism enters. Both these meanings have appeared at various stages of the argument for a genetic view



of the moral life. It has been pointed out, for example, in connection with the discussion of the moral ideal that one of the important questions is, What the moral ideal is for. We demand, that is, that it shall have some use. And it was remarked that when the answer is found to this inquiry we have the clue to what in ethical science is meant by motive. Motive is a function of the moral ideal when the moral ideal serves a purpose in the moral life. We have also seen that no conception of this life can be gained, in general or in particular, which does not place the moral ideal in connection with the concrete facts and relations through which our psycho-physical existence is maintained. The moral ideal is never, either in its origin or development, a floating ghost which is incapable of becoming consubstantial with the events and situations in which our life is carried on. On the contrary, it is that which operates in and through the concrete particulars of life in the interests of greater complexity and higher organization. But when it does this, we signalize this fact by saying that we are then dealing with the question of motive. Motive is the moral ideal operating as a principle of becoming amid the facts of change.

The term 'function,' secondly, is also used in a mathematical sense. The facts, in this case, are those which the logician summarizes under the phrase 'concomitant variation.' Mathematically, this may be expressed by saying that any algebraic expression or quantity which is dependent for its value on another one is the 'function' of that other. For example, we may take the relation of the circumference of a circle to its diameter. When the latter changes so will the former; it is, therefore, the function of the latter. Now, while it is true that ethics can have nothing to do with quantitative variations, functions of the variational type are not, thereby, excluded from ethical science. Indeed, it is through the recognition of this meaning of the term 'function' that we are able to throw interesting light upon some of the perplexing variety which the moral life exhibits in its historical manifestations. As examples of this variety, we may cite class spirit, professional pride, national prejudice, etc. An in-



interesting citation of similar phenomena was made by Locke<sup>1</sup> to disprove the innateness of moral ideas and principles, and they have since multiplied in our knowledge, through the labor of anthropologists, to a wonderful extent.<sup>2</sup> The present state of our knowledge in this department makes it quite impossible for ethics either to minimize or to ignore the facts which are here implied. The bearing of such facts on moral theory, however, seems to be clear. Whatever the diversities in moral practice which in this way are forced upon our attention, they may be understood in the light of the ideal of moral excellence which is operative among the people who provide us with our several examples. If, therefore, we find that the killing of female infants, or of the old and useless, is approved among some tribes or races at certain periods, and disapproved by the same or other tribes or races at the same or other periods, the reason is that a different moral ideal is determining the respective ways in which the materials of life are getting moral organization. In other words, the ways in which life is organized in all its particulars, individual and social, will depend upon the character of the ideal through which the organization proceeds. The types of conduct which any people display will vary with the ideas they entertain as to what is morally worthy. If, then, the motive in ethics is concerned with the forms in which the moral life is organized, there is a sense in which it is true that, according to the mathematical interpretation of the term, the motive is a 'function' of the moral ideal.

We may now pass from statement to illustration. Taking it for granted that the *status* of motive in moral life and ethical theory is sufficiently clear, we shall consider some of the ways in which it works, and point out some of the relations into which it enters at different levels of intellectual and moral development. In particular, we shall group the material under three heads. First, some remarks will be made concerning the inchoate begin-

<sup>1</sup> *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Bk. I, Chapters 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> An array of such facts may be found in Westermarck's *Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*, and in Hobhouse's *Morals in Evolution*.

nings of morality in the individual. We shall then, secondly, pass on to consider the relation of motive to the moral judgment. The place of motive in those developments which we have signalized as the personal and the individual, thirdly, will engage our attention.<sup>1</sup>

The view of morality which we have sought to develop has made it possible to guard against two classes of error: the errors of the individualistic and social theories respectively. The limitation of individualism lies in supposing that all the essential facts and forces of the moral life are spontaneously involved in the individual as part of his psychological outfit, and that the social world is a factor of the moral phenomena only because it provides a place in which to live out the potencies which constitute his native endowment. Social theories, on the other hand, because they ground the moral life in the community which provides not only the material but fosters the laws of moral behavior, are liable to go to the extreme of considering individual morality as only conventional, that is, as consisting in the adjustment of one's conduct to recognized social requirements. Just as on the former view there is no capitalization of moral forces, so on this no provision is made for moral progress. The difficulties which confront any attempt to construct an ethical theory from either of these points of view without taking into account elements which are provided by the other are insuperable, not only in face of the complex social and moral facts of advanced communities, but also when we consider the organization of primitive societies and when, by analysis, we aim to ascertain the constant factors of any moral situation. In the simplest, as in the most complex, cases of moral behavior there are coöperating factors of which the theories adverted to, in their extreme forms, have clearly recognized only one. It is one of the gains of a genetic view that we come to a

<sup>1</sup> With these divisions cf. Wundt's *Principal Forms of Moral Motive*, *The Principles of Morality*, pp. 94-108, and Baldwin's *Sanctions of Impulse, Desire and Right*, *Social and Ethical Interpretations*, fourth edition, Chapter IX.

direct recognition of this fact. Indeed, the genetic view brings together these divergent truths.

These remarks are introduced to safeguard a source of misunderstanding at the start. We are pledged to offer some suggestions as to how the moral life gets its first forms of organization in the individual. The danger is that the old atomic associations of the term 'individual' will lead the reader astray from the proper understanding of our purpose. What this is may be indicated by saying that we do not use the term in its moral connotation but with its psychological denotation. The fact to which we wish to call attention is that while ethics cannot hand its tasks over to the psychologist for their proper determination, yet it finds that moral organization takes place within the lines laid down by the constitution of the moral subject as made known by psychological analysis. Or, to state the same truth differently, the moral subject with whom ethics is concerned is the psycho-physical individual of the psychologist. Psychology provides the ground plan on which ethics rears the science of the moral life. What we have to show, therefore, is how the moral ideal in the form of motive operates within the psychological framework to effect an organization of character and of conduct which shall be the embodiment of the ends which, in any given case, are the indices of progress. This is one aspect of the more general inquiry whether our view of morality can be correlated with the results of a scientific study of mind. The answer to this question requires a careful consideration of the sources of mental and moral life, and we must find our point of departure at a time when the moral forces have not changed the current of consciousness, or fitted it to become more adequately the vehicle of their own meanings. Hence, as we said, we are to be concerned with the inchoate beginnings of morality in the (psycho-physical) individual.

One of the assured results of psychological study, as it has been carried on in recent years, is the fact that the consciousness of the inner world, as inner, is a late development in the individual and the race. This, of course, implies that the farther we trace the process of consciousness back to its more primitive and funda-



mental forms, the more does it appear as a fact in the same world with the things that it knows. The subject-object relation does not exist for the feeling-active mind. Minds are one with things, and both minds and things are points of departure for series of changes through which adjustments of one kind or another are secured within the same world-order. We find an interesting reflection of this in our common speech. No one, we suppose, not even a psychologist, can avoid the vulgar error of speaking, in the practical relations of life, of the sensory qualities of objects as if they were the property of things. Thus, the red belongs to the rose, the odor is an attribute of the lily. But there is no better reason for this than for saying that the pain I receive from the thorn on the rose, or the unpleasantness I feel from the oppressive odor of the lily are also qualities of the rose and the lily. And yet, theoretically at least, we must suppose that the affective experiences were, at some time in the life history of consciousness, differentiated from the mass of objective facts and relations and became the nucleus of a class by themselves. If this were the case, it is clear that the movement toward the differentiation of mind must have taken place in the early stages of race progress along the lines indicated by the series of changes which, as we have said, things and minds, psychologically considered, are the means at a later date of initiating. It would, therefore, be a mistake to suppose that the objective characteristics, which all consciousness has to start with, become lost when its nature, forms, and relations become more complex and are better understood. Consciousness remains throughout what it was at the beginning—a particular qualification of reality.

The recognition of this connection with reality which all consciousness has and maintains is of prime importance in reaching an understanding as to how the moral life gets established in the midst of the various other relations which the psycho-physical individual sustains. If the distinction between nature and mind, as we have suggested, follows the line of cleavage introduced through the grouping of those experiences which are affective in character, then, since nature and mind, or the facts which these terms indicate,

form coördinate groups, the answer to the question, How does the individual come to react to the moral world? is, psychologically, no more abstruse than the question, How he comes to react to the natural world? Genetically, *it is the reactions themselves which have issued, within the one common reality, in the presentation of these differentiated objects.* Fundamentally, therefore, the machinery by which we get adjusted to the world of things is sufficient for our adjustment to the world of minds. If, following psychological tradition, 'perception' is the term which describes the processes which are involved in adaptation to the former, 'imitation' is a term which indicates the same processes in their relation to the latter. Considering the subject as being concerned with the changes which come about through the adjustments which the world of things and of minds makes important, it is difficult to see, if there is no loss of grip on the facts of reality when we are dealing with the material world, why there should be any when we are dealing with the social and moral world. Adaptation in a constituted world of objects is an initial fact to be noted, and it is this adaptation which forms the body of facts we summarize under the term mental and moral development.

It follows from what has been said that moral, as well as mental, growth is grounded in the demands which the environments into which we come make upon us. The possibility of a moral life is first met with at the point where the possibility of mental life makes itself apparent, namely, where the demands of the objective order in which we find ourselves situated become pressing. It has, we know, been said that the only imperative of nature is in the form of a must, and therefore, that nature cannot provide the conditions of a moral existence. But if we start from the point of view which has been stated, and which implies a condition where the moral and the natural—or the facts to which these terms correspond—are, as yet, undifferentiated, we shall find ourselves incapable of stating an antinomy which the differentiation of the natural and the moral alone has made possible. It is because we have placed nature over against man in an absolute way that morality seems to lose its foothold in the reality of things.

We do not deny that the growth of moral consciousness carries us far beyond the rudimentary beginnings which we are just now contemplating; but we are strongly of the opinion that to deny, wittingly or unwittingly, that the imperative which nature voices has its counterpart in the moral world, is not only to effeminate our morality but to demoralize our science. It is at this point that we need to get back to fundamentals, and to recognize that the first word of the moral, as of the natural, law is 'Thou shalt.' It is this word that Nature speaks, through all the sciences, to her devotees. And not only for the sake of science, but more for the sake of morality, do we need to claim our rights, as ethicists, to hear and to heed the commands which issue out of the bosom of reality. To remain negligent here is to cut ourselves off from the roots of things, and to fail to provide conditions for the objective grounding of moral truth.

An exhaustive treatment of the psychological problems with which the question of motive is at this point implicated would require us to consider at least the following special topics: (1) the development of consciousness from its rudimentary beginning in which objectivity is at its maximum to that stage which we signify by the term 'perception,' in which control is gained of the objective factors through which we are better able to regulate our practical relations to the world of things; (2) 'imitation,' as a special form of perception which comes into play as a consequence of differences in the behavior of the groups of objects—things and minds—to which practically it is of importance to get adjusted. We may, however, pass this and other related matter by, since these and other kindred subjects have received a statement elsewhere by the writer to which the reader is referred.<sup>1</sup> We may be excused from repeating here what is said in that place because all that, at present, we wish to maintain is that the motive, in the elementary stages of mental development, rests upon the possibility of individual behavior being modified by the pressure of a

<sup>1</sup> "Suggestions toward a Psychogenetic Theory of Mind," *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, Vol. IV, pp. 342-356.



conditioning environment which determines beforehand the kinds of reaction which it is profitable to have occur. We are familiar with the demands of this statement in regard to one class of objects. Behavior in presence of the physical universe is, very largely, a predetermined affair. Our physical being, not to say, well-being, depends upon our ability to recognize what is permitted to us in view of the constitution of things with which we, as physical, are intimately bound up. The point of our contention is that not otherwise, at first, does the other class of objects—those which we refer to, in a general way, as social—present itself. Just as perception is the instrument through which we come to an acquaintance with the facts and relations of the physical world, so imitation is the instrument which has been developed through the pressure which the social world exerts for the getting done of those things which are in accord with its own special requirements. Through imitation we not only ascertain what kind of a world this is, but what the things are that we should do. From the psychological standpoint, both perception and imitation are an objective determination, in terms of conscious experience, of the world of reality within which the differentiation of things and of minds has arisen.

Now, if these statements are correct, it is at once clear what we mean when we say that the law of the moral, as of the physical, world is some form of necessity. It is difficult to see how it could be otherwise; and it appears otherwise only when the analytic procedure upon which all genetic science must rest has not been carried far enough. For the dualism upon which the opposite view rests, and which gives it apparent support, can make a defense of itself only by taking the duality of experience as an ultimate fact of the nature of things. But to do this necessitates the abandonment of the genetic inquiry, and the arbitrary fixing of points of departure in philosophical inquiry. Pluralism is a more consistent position than this. But neither pluralism nor dualism can give a very good account of the fact to which attention has been called, the fact that in the natural and in the moral worlds the first word is a command which corresponds to the order which underlies both. In this connection we have to do only with the

moral world, and the point is only too obvious that the motive appears here in the various forms of pressure which society is able to bring to bear upon the individual for the sake of the ends which society is interested in having conserved. The possibility of such pressure we have provided for in refusing to take the individual apart from the environment in which his life is being lived.

But there are certain particular conditions which need to be pointed out. This pressure may be viewed from two standpoints. It is either something which society does, or it is something which the individual experiences. When it is the former, we find that society provides the conditions of a vivid, concrete, *ad hoc* realization and presentation of the moral ideal. All that society can do in a moral issue is to envisage concretely the ideal under which the social forces are to operate, and for which the coöperation of the individual is sought. Punishments and rewards do not belong here except as an after-result, and for the purpose of emphasizing the benefits of social conformity. When it is something which the individual experiences, social pressure exhibits two sides. First, it falls under the general law of inertia. This is a basic fact of the psycho-physical individual. Stated with reference to our problem, it means that special conditions must intervene for the production of variation. Positively, it points out the fact that behavior tends to get set in given directions. At the level of the development which we are here presupposing, the directions are determined by the complex psycho-sociological conditions which are operative in the concrete instance. But since, most conspicuously, it is a matter of adjustment which we have under consideration the possibilities are controlled by the demands which the social order makes upon its individual members. Moral requirements work within the psycho-physical individual by taking advantage of the fact that the law of inertia tends to make permanent the enforced reactions. Accommodation to moral demands becomes the basis of an established moral character.

Second, we have the fact which in general psychological theory we refer to as 'suggestion.' By suggestion we mean the clues which any normal psychical process develops for its own guidance

in reaching an appropriate terminus. We have seen that mental continuity at the level of perception takes place under a principle of objective control which, in the event of its being a moral affair, is provided for in the social demands which are felt to be imperative. In imitation we do the thing which is presented with sufficient social reënforcement. But imitation is not an original fact. It is possible only when it functions through the paths which have been laid down in the psycho-physical individual in the more elementary and rudimentary stage which we have called suggestion. Imitation, as the instrument of social conformity, is grafted on to the accidental reactions which have been established in the preceding spontaneous stage of mental growth. In other words, when imitation becomes functional, there are already available certain acquired forms of reaction that lend themselves as instruments to the new needs which imitation in part satisfies. Imitation, therefore, is not superfluous. Suggestion, it is true, is taken up into imitation and provides the framework within which it works, but imitation reacts upon suggestion not only in the way of its further development, but also in the way of providing it with a more fixed and extended meaning. The latter point is for our purpose the more important. For while the clues of suggestion are always in terms of sensory values, those of imitation are always in terms of social values. That is to say, the individual sensory values of suggestion through imitation find the way open by which it becomes possible for them to have a social reference. Now, what is this social reference? Ethically it is the moral ideal making itself felt as the motive of future conduct. It is the moral ideal taking hold of the psycho-physical mechanism, and using it in the interests of moral growth. For, as we saw above, society makes demands upon the individual which, as we can now affirm, are enforced through enlisting the fundamental instincts and acquirements of the individual in the service of the ends which it is thought desirable to secure. In this way what at first appears as an external prescription is seen in its true character as the natural result of the unfolding and developing powers and capabilities of the individual.



Thus, while the moral ideal appears, from one point of view, as a command, from another we can trace it to the gathering powers of the individual life pressing on toward the larger possibilities which are open to it in mental and moral growth.

## CHAPTER VI.

### MOTIVE AND THE MORAL JUDGMENT.

In a previous chapter we have considered the moral judgment as the instrument through which the moral ideal comes to explicit definition. It will serve to connect our present discussion with what was then said, and also to open the way to an understanding of the relations of motive to moral judgment, if we notice, more than has been done, what the characteristics of the moral judgment are. This can be done at this stage the better because, in the light of our former exposition, these will be seen to follow from the relations which the moral judgment sustains to the moral ideal. For if, as has been shown, the moral ideal is a type of conduct which is envisaged as demanding fulfillment, the moral judgment, through which this comes to be expressed, cannot but be both practical and unconditional. By practical is meant that the moral judgment does not primarily define a fact or truth, but that it presents a course of action to the will for realization.<sup>1</sup> This feature it shares with all other judgments which state the relations which are possible or permissible in a social community. The conventions of society, for example, whether expressed or implied, are instructions to the individual how he must behave if he is to receive social recognition. Very much the same may be said of statutory law; here we have the formulation of prescriptions addressed to the will of the individual so that he shall not transgress the limitations which are imposed by the fact that he is a member of an organized state. In both of these relations, however, it has always been recognized that too much regulation defeats the end for which all regulation exists, and that considerable freedom from prescribed forms of behavior must be allowed if the

<sup>1</sup> Belot, *Études de Morale Positive*, p. 35, *et passim*.

best social and political results are to be attained. This does not mean that in those areas of life where custom or law has not spoken there is no practical appeal, but that here is the place where, in a free society and a free state, æsthetic sensibility and moral tact are allowed to come in and determine the future legislative and conventional action.

When we turn to the other characteristic of the moral judgment, we meet with a fact which has no parallel outside the field of human values.<sup>1</sup> We said that moral judgments are not only practical, but unconditional. This cannot be shown of any other form of the social judgment. The customs of society are always changing. The laws of the state are always in process of revision. This is because in society and in the state the practical judgment is seen to rest upon changing requirements. In these relations, therefore, the practical judgment always implies a condition. Hence conformity to prescribed requirements is met with in these directions *because* or *when* or *if* some permanent need of the community is, or seems to be, embodied in the indicated courses of conduct. What these permanent needs may be, the makers of social and of statutory laws, as such, are unable to say. The most that they can do is to shape the course of the future with reference to them, once they have become known. But when it is pointed out in this connection that the moral judgment expresses an unconditional ideal—or, which is the same thing, issues in a categorical imperative—we must take this to mean that to ethics belongs the business of formulating the fundamental and permanent ends which are to be realized in the diversified activities of social life. We may, therefore, reshape the conditional aspect of all other social judgments by saying that the ends which they hold before the will are binding on condition that they embody, in the spheres of activity which they severally represent, the ideals which ethics defines as having unconditional worth.

<sup>1</sup> Under the term 'field of human values' are included not only the moral ideal, but the ideals of æsthetics and religion as well. There is an absoluteness about value judgments which mark off the sphere of values as quite unique. On the general subject, cf. Urban's *Valuation: Its Nature and Laws*.



It may be well to anticipate an objection from the side of the other social sciences. We shall be called to account for confusing issues because, it will be said, we do not know how to be fair to the rights of those other sciences which, in common with ethics, are concerned with the study of human practice. Economics will claim that it has a clearly defined field in the study of the conditions and laws of the production and distribution of material wealth. Politics will be no less certain that when it gives itself to the study of the principles of the organization and relations of states it is not encroaching upon ethical territory, and has rights which are not to be ignored. Sociology, however it may be defined, will equally insist that it is impossible to understand its place in the sisterhood of sciences by any principle of subordination. There is a certain justice in these claims. There is a sense in which it is true that the specialized activities of these sciences are severally theirs. But it is equally obvious that when each of them attempts to work out conclusions which are based upon considerations which take no thought of the kind of beings which are associated in these various lines of activity, it commits a capital offense which enfeebles every effort to solve its distinctive problems, and becomes positively misleading and harmful in the practical relations of life. For, as one remarks, the "development of human institutions of every sort" is the resultant "of the reactions of moral selves upon one another and upon their environment."<sup>1</sup> It is, in other words, in the nature of the units of society that we must find the ground of those activities which form the specialized studies of economics, politics and sociology. But when this has been recognized, it is clear that a larger field, and a more useful work, is open to the students of these sciences. From this point of view we have contended that while ethics sets before it the task of maintaining the possibility and defining the nature and limits of the moral ideal, it must do this in connection with a study of the processes and results of all the other concrete social sciences. It is, therefore, far from the present line of remarks to halt the progress of these other pursuits; it is, however, intended to keep them near enough to all the empirical data from which they start to make their results not only reliable in their own fields, but serviceable also in related fields of inquiry. Ethics

<sup>1</sup> Ladd, *Philosophy of Conduct*, p. 540. The whole chapter (XXIII) should be read in this connection. On the relation of economics and ethics, consult Sorley, 'Ethical Aspects of Economics,' *Int. Journal of Ethics*, Vol. XVII, 1f; 317f., 437f.

demands, not as an over-lord, but as furthering the objects which she is set to cultivate, that the relationships between the social sciences be rigorously maintained, for it is in these sciences that we see how the moral ideal gets fitting application to the changes in the material, political, and social conditions under which man is set to work out a larger future good. And this may be claimed not merely because ethics needs its concrete examples, but chiefly because all the organized activities of human life are the outgrowth of the advancement of man in mental and moral discernment.

What we have seen is that, on its formal side, the moral judgment, like all social judgment, is practical, but, unlike other social judgments, it is also unconditional. Now, by unconditional we mean that what the judgment presents to the will for accomplishment does not rest, for its validity, upon any extraneous consideration.<sup>1</sup> We confront here a demand which, without doubt, is unavoidable, but which has all the appearance of irritating arrogance. With something of a protest, it may be asked, Why may we not question the rights of the moral ideal to command the allegiance of our will? The possibility of the question involves, however, the same perplexity from which the question is intended to relieve us. For if we succeed in grounding the moral life in some more ultimate and unconditioned fact, the same inquiry may be raised with reference to this, and we have gained only a temporary respite.<sup>2</sup> Besides this, we have meanwhile transformed the facts of the moral life, and introduced confusion into our thinking. For doubtless moral requirements are unconditional. This is recognized not only in theory but in practice, and not merely in any one age or civilization, but in all. It was this that Socrates, for example, remarked. There was

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Book I, Chapters 1, 5, 10. Cf. Hume, *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, Appendix I, V.

<sup>2</sup> That is, so long as we remain within the scope of a scientific ethics. The possibility of a metaphysics of ethics is chiefly suggested in this paragraph, and we may return to it at some other time.

nothing, according to him, no impulse or passion, so strong that it could divert the individual from seeking to realize the good once it had been conceived. This has been the universal testimony. The uniqueness of the fact is impressive, and among ethicists attempts have been made, not to question, but to elucidate it. The point to be noted here is that this demand for elucidation has its own significance. This may be seen if we note how the demand arises. We set out to place the moral life under critical analysis. We find that always and everywhere it appears as the subject of some form or other of valuation. On the theoretical side, the judgment gives expression to this in the form of a categorical imperative. There arises, then, two related questions: the practical question concerns the temporal relations under which the moral life has to be lived; the theoretical question is whether an absolute demand can be held possible. In face of this situation, we may take some such position as this: either our analysis is defective, and then we must resolve this absolute into its finite parts; or it is accurate, and then we must give it a theoretical justification. Failing of the former alternative, ethical writers of all schools have undertaken an indirect verification of the analysis by maintaining its abstract possibility. But what does this mean? It means, as we have, in part, already seen, that they are called upon to work over again the moral facts, from the point of view of the concrete relations of the ideal in human conduct, for the purpose of showing that the account balances. In another statement, this amounts to saying that the unconditional imperative of the moral judgment is a factor in the moral life through which it receives its verification and fulfillment. But so viewed, the problem becomes definitively a question of motive. From this standpoint, then, the question of motive appears as the demand for an exposition of the grounds on which the possibility of an unconditional imperative can be entertained by a moral will. And if any such attempt should seem to contradict the claims we have made on behalf of ideals, it must be said that this can be avoided only when we pursue the course indicated by genetic interests. For the question of motive, from this point of view, is an inquiry into the method by which categor-



ical demands get their fulfillment and realization in human life. However, the possibility here is not theoretical, it is practical.<sup>1</sup>

To the fact that in psychology our knowledge of the nature and laws of the affectional life is now, and always has been, in a quite unsatisfactory, if not chaotic condition, corresponds the fact that in ethics the subject of motive, which admittedly has to do with the moral feelings is imperfectly understood. We call attention to this situation not merely to indicate a special line of research for both the psychologist and ethicist, but to emphasize the necessary limitations under which the following pages have to be written. It is not likely that the needs are going to be met, either in psychology or in ethics, except by patient and long-continued toil of many workmen; it is, therefore, quite impossible now to do more than suggest a direction in which an answer may be found to the questions involved. This is a case where wisdom lies in discretion, and it is better to aim at something within range and hit it, than to aim at the stars and miss them. The task is a broad one, it is vitally important, and it is immediately urgent. What, then, are the special questions which require to be considered? They are at least two: the origin and the nature of the moral feelings as instrumental to the moral life. These we shall take up in the order named.

We remarked above upon the absence of distinctively moral feelings among those who are in the imitative stage of their moral training. This may be verified by observation of young children, and it is, no doubt, in part the explanation of some features of the morality of childlike races. The illustrations are not important. What we wish to indicate is that so long as imitation remains the only instrument of moral culture, the kind and amount of feeling which is available for ethical development is already prescribed in the simpler forms of pleasure-pain connected with the modes of action which have become established in suggestion. Imitation, as we saw, works within the paths that have become permeable through the organization of the active life along the lines

<sup>1</sup> Belot, *Études de Morale Positive*, pp. 35, 36.

indicated by the immediate values which are defined in sensation. However, in order to take possession of these modes of expression, imitation must be able to connect the determined courses of conduct with the simpler feelings by which, in the first place, they were guaranteed. But since the actions which result from imitation are relatively more complex, that is, since we find in imitation a new organization of the established reactions, either through the introduction of new material, or the new combination of old, or both, we may also expect to find that there is a corresponding complication of the feeling elements through which the perfected imitations are given a fixed position in the economy of life. This will be evident if it is born in mind that imitation is one of two differentiations—perception being the other—which arise in practical response to the demands which a permanent or stable environment makes upon its conditioned subjects. The motives of perception, it is agreed, are to be found in the importance which the world of things comes to have on account of the dangers which are attendant upon misadjustment. But things are not the only element in the environment. There are also selves—the world of persons. These also control and limit behavior as do things. But in this case, perception does not give the knowledge of what is distinctive, or practically important. The problem is the same in both perception and imitation, but the difference in the objects considered makes it important that separate *media* of knowledge should come to development. Hence imitation is the instrument through which the common, permanent characteristics of society come to be emphasized in the education, both intellectual and moral, of the individual and the race. But when this parallelism between perception and imitation, answering to the concomitant factors of the complex psycho-physical environment, is fairly grasped, we may expect that in the case of imitation the motives will be as complex as are those of perception, and that, in this case also, they will have passed beyond the simple type found at the stage of suggestion.

Can we indicate the way in which, conceivably, this may come about? We start from the pleasure-pain experience which is con-

nected with the motor responses which, upon the basis of congenital inheritance, have been established. Here feeling is an affective response to the success we have attained in controlling the motor mechanism.<sup>1</sup> In imitation we have a wider and more diversified set of reactions, and, therefore, the pleasure-pain experiences are deepened and broadened. With this growing complexity, which is the fact underlying mental development, there is no reason to suppose that susceptibility to pleasure-pain is at any stage lessened. The more highly organized psycho-physiologically we become, the more acutely sensitive are we to changes of a pleasure-pain sort. But what is more important for our purpose is to note that moral demands set a strain upon the imitative processes which, without modification, they are not able to bear. We may indicate this quite simply. We understand that the algedonic character of our simpler actions is not merely the result, but the support, of the movements through which the pleasure-pain experience is reintroduced. This statement holds not only of the simpler cases, but also of imitation. Social conformity may very well be maintained through the pleasure which one has in doing the things which others are doing. The study of children in the family and in the school, or in any of their social relations, will provide abundant illustration. But while this gives useful training for morality, it may be doubted—perhaps most people would doubt—whether this is definitively an ethical phenomenon. What has been emphasized as peculiar to morality is that moral actions make a social difference. Hence, in the case we are considering, what we have to ascertain is how this social difference may be made part of the imitative individual's conscious experience in such a way that when the same or a similar thing is demanded of him the motive shall have become changed. At the level where imitation first becomes possible the only motive is the pleasure-pain connected with the course of action imitation implies. But however accentuated the hedonic qualities may be, the fact that conduct is part of a larger

<sup>1</sup> Feeling in this case is not the pleasure-pain experience from which actions get done; it is, to adopt a phrase of Laurie's, in his *Meditations*, a *pathic* feeling.



complex of interests which society is organized to maintain prevents an imitative action terminating at the same point where suggestive actions terminate, and implicates the individual in that social redistribution which every moral act brings about. The imitative individual, therefore, actually finds himself in a different relation to the social world as the result of his own conduct. What, then, is the character of this changed relation? From the side of the group, it is, of course, a judgment; in this way society undertakes to express its estimate of the conduct of its members. But from the side of the subject of conduct, whatever else it may also dimly be, it is most clearly and consciously a *new kind of feeling*.

This may be shown in two ways. In the first place, the individual's previous experience of feeling has been connected with changes in his own organism; feeling is present as the support of just those motor changes which the organism is capable of sustaining. The feeling-motor connection is organic. It is, fundamentally, the instrument and the material of conscious life. What, therefore, could make a stronger claim than just those actions which our own pleasures maintain? These connections are no doubt retained, but their scope is transcended. The limits may be indicated if we follow out what may be called the curve of feeling. When any wave of feeling has run its course there is a settling down again into what, most accurately, is described as a state of satisfaction (*satis facere*). This is a point of equilibrium between feeling and action in the conative-affective individual. To move from it requires a disturbance of the feeling-motor relation, for example in the form of desire. Now, when society undertakes to express itself morally in the individual for the purpose of impressing its judgment, it must travel the same path it took in the first instance toward getting those things done which, at the stage we are now considering, have become the subject of approval or disapproval. This we saw was the highway of the feelings. But why in this case do we say it is a *new kind* of feeling when in the earlier instance it was not so. Because, briefly no outlet is provided by the old path for the feeling-motor consciousness. The new feeling attaches to

the completed task, and modifies the natural satisfaction into which we relapse when a normal conscious process has run its course. Thus, if the judgment is one of approbation, there is a heightening of the feeling-motor tension which gets expanded retrospectively, and the situation or event to which the judgment refers gets selectively chosen for future repetition. If, on the other hand, the judgment is reversed, the feeling-motor tension is depressed, and the situation or event to which the judgment refers loses its support in the individual's consciousness, and is, so far, inhibited. Moral feeling is thus a modification in the way of reinforcement and abatement of the natural satisfaction, so that the conduct to which it attaches comes to be selectively chosen for survival or elimination.

This brings us to the second point. What has been implied is that feeling needs a point of attachment if it is to become permanent. Feelings are not wandering spectres of the mental life. In view of this, we have to ask with what the new feeling comes to be connected so that it may bear its part in the future development of the individual. One possibility has been excluded. It can neither attach itself to an old motor reaction, nor is there any new motor outlet with which it may become assimilated. Consequently, *this* feeling is not, like the old, the immediate antecedent of motor adjustment. How, then, can it be made permanent? The answer may be put generally by saying that the moral feeling of the individual must become a function of whatever it is in the society by which it was induced. This, we said, was the moral judgment. Now, as we saw, the moral judgment uses as its norm the moral ideal which it interprets and applies to concrete social situations. What, therefore, society does in its approbation and disapprobation is to state whether or not the ideal which is embodied in the moral judgment has received adequate recognition in individual behavior. It consequently follows, since the new feeling is the counterpart of the moral judgment, that if it is to receive sufficient support, it must be possible to develop in the individual the consciousness of the idea which, explicitly presupposed in the moral judgment, exists in the individual, as feeling, in only a vague and shifting

way. The feeling, that is, cannot attach to any already established form of behavior because it exists, as feeling, as the sense of the idea which, through the moral judgment, became operative in the individual consciousness. Moral feelings doubtless are important in relation to moral behavior, but their relation to conduct is not that of the immediate sort illustrated in the pleasure-pain reaction. They function in the individual mediately through the ideal to which they are permanently attached in the moral life. It is this mediate connection with practical life through the ideal which differentiates them in the feeling life of man.

Let us turn, now, to the function of the moral feelings in their relation to the moral judgment. For our purpose, it is enough to distinguish pleasure and pain from the ethical feelings. What we shall see is that these, while functionally distinct, are not independent of, but are related, through development, to each other. Two things have been made clear: first that feeling is the way in which an object on which action terminates comes to be defined in the unreflective stage of mental development; second, that this object gets reinstatement, or becomes again the goal of a creative impulse, when its absence arouses feelings which originally gave it its psychic support. Hence what is known as desire. Desire is the sensed absence of a once experienced object which has become suffused with the feelings formerly connected with that object, together with the adjustment of the motor apparatus in a way appropriate to carrying out the movements through which, in the first instance, the object was given. In desire, then, as we know it at this level of development, we have the reinstatement of an object of sense without the mediation of a memory image; it is the center of a feeling-motor function through which a process of verification may be carried out.<sup>1</sup> We have here not only an interest-

<sup>1</sup> I have called this form of revival a *sense-image*, and have defined it as "the sensed presence of objects in our environment which have not for the purpose of the present behavior been perceived"—*Jour. of Phil., Psy. and Sci. Meth.* Vol. IV, p. 355, note 20. With this may be compared Baldwin, *Thought and Things*, Vol. 1, p. 150 and note 2.



ing, but an important stage in mental and ethical development. We face one of those facts which while firmly rooted in the past indicates the way of progress. The control of the conative process is in this case exercised by the sense-image. The sense-image is the first form in which reproduction as a psychic fact takes place. What earlier, and as leading out into this, occurs is the reinstatement of the conditions which make a presentation of the same object possible. That is to say, we get the same thing again because the feeling-motor process gets its fulfillment in the series of changes which leads to that thing. The object, here, is the *terminus in quo*. It is for this reason that we can not agree with Baldwin that the "recognition of sense objects as such without the medium of memory images" is a function of recognition which belongs in "the sphere of 'primary attention' in the sense mode."<sup>1</sup> It is, doubtless, a safe presumption that "a low organism having crude sense objects only, has along with them feelings of familiarity." But the 'feeling of familiarity,' in this case, does not serve, however vaguely, as a guide to the object, but is attendant upon the objects presented, and is conditioned by that fact.<sup>2</sup> The sense-image, on the contrary, is conceived by us as serving to arouse, and to give direction to the feeling-motor process itself. It cannot be placed earlier than the phase we have marked off by the term suggestion. It, at any rate, uses mechanized forms of behavior for the purpose of carrying out a series of activities which is differently initiated from those whose forms it calls into use. Instead, therefore, of being a *terminus in quo*, the sense-image is a *terminus ad quem*. It should, however, be remarked that beyond this very general function, it is a matter of inquiry what its *termini* are, and how far it has the means of securing them. As regards

<sup>1</sup> See reference in last note.

<sup>2</sup> Of course, if that is all that Baldwin means, we do not dispute the position; we are, indeed, in agreement with him. Nevertheless, we must hold that he has missed an opportunity to run down the pre-logical roots of memory and imagination to their simpler form in the sense-image. This is what we do in the text so far as it is consistent with our present interests, which are ethical and not logical.

the latter point, our opinion is that it is very much of a hit-and-miss affair, because its reliance must be upon existing modes of reaction of that simpler sort which when once started run an established course. And yet, because there is no clear recognition of *what* it is that the sense-image introduces, it is quite possible for modes of reaction to be started which fail to realize its intention. The importance of this, psycho-genetically, is that the hard-and-fast connection which is maintained in suggestion between inner process and outer object is broken up. This is a condition of progress. It sets free certain processes for other ends than those which were originally conserved by them, and it tends permanently to fix certain ends by deepening and strengthening the connection between them and the processes in which they are secured. We may say, with some truth, that the sense-image plays a part, at its level of development, analogous to that of both memory and imagination; to that of the former because it reinstates a previously experienced object, to that of the latter because it makes new kinds of experience possible. When these functions become specialized, as they are in memory and imagination, there is presented a condition which renders permanently possible the deepening and the development in scope and character of the feeling-motor consciousness.<sup>1</sup> Imagination takes the lead because it makes possible

<sup>1</sup> It may be well to point out that the sense-image is bound up with the practical attitude of the organism in which it appears. It is an instrument of better adjustment to environment. How far it serves outside of biological and economic relations it would be difficult to say. Perhaps the statement may be hazarded that it is its failure to meet, or to meet adequately, the demands of social organization that has led to the splitting off of its two functions in the specialized activities of memory and imagination. The distinction involved here, of course, is that between those experiences, or those objects of experience, which 'stay put,' and those which do not. And if it is objected that this distinction is not coincident with that of natural and social, it must be remembered that for primitive man—and perchance civilized man is in this respect primitive—all incalculable forces are social whether they fall under what we call nature or mind. In this distinction between memory and imagination, we have the basis for the distinction between

the presentation of a new complex situation as the center around which the feeling-motor processes may get a new organization. This is not true of memory. Memory secures, as permanent gain to the organism, the results of past experience. It does not lead out to new types of experience. But because of its limitations, it is an important factor in moral development. It is, as we hope may become clear in the next chapter, the instrument which the moral judgment uses to secure those kinds and types of reaction in the individual which are in harmony with the tradition of the group.

science and what is not science, only it has to be remarked that were it not for what is not science—were it not for imagination—science itself would be a short-lived affair. For ethics, the development here indicated is important because it marks the difference between what 'was and therefore may be again' and 'what was and therefore ought to be now.' The difference in the conclusion is due to the growth in feeling which accompanies mental development.



## CHAPTER VII.

### MOTIVE IN RELATION TO THE PERSONAL AND THE INDIVIDUAL.

A functional interpretation of memory and imagination gives the point of view for considering certain characteristic features of the moral life. The importance of this interpretation lies in the fact that it forces for ethics the distinction between the personal and the individual, and presents as the unsolved problem of our own day the relations between them. The limits of our discussion are fairly clear. What we propose is to use the differentiation of memory and imagination on the mental side as corresponding to the differentiation of the personal and the individual on the moral side, and to consider how these play back and forth on each other by means of the moral judgment, to give definiteness and enrichment to the moral motive in the permanence and effectiveness of which the moral life not only secures a stable organization for racial experience, but guarantees to unborn generations the liberties of the future.

In the first place, however, we must restate our terms, and then we shall better be able to consider the character of the motive by which each of these is mediated. The personal and the individual were presented above as social concepts. They express, we said, the relations of the members of the group to the group as a whole. The difference between them is, in part, a difference of the relations which each implies. In the personal there are expressed those relations which are determined by the organic structure of the society, and which are fundamental to its being and remaining what it is. The personal, consequently, signifies those qualities of individual conduct and character which make social coöperation possible. This means that the person is interpreted through the group. This meaning has been wrought into the

popular wisdom literature of all races, as, for example when it is said that 'evil communications corrupt good manners,' and 'we are judged by the company we keep.' The truth of this view lies in the fact that the behavior in question was learned in the first place by imitative appropriation of the social example. In the individual, on the other hand, another set of relations is expressed. They are those which are, or appear to be, in contravention of the conventional requirements which social tradition embodies. Not to consider extreme cases, we may say, quite generally, that they are, and always are felt to be, a disturbing factor of good order. The reason for this is that the control in the situation is not, as it was in the personal, social, but individual. Society, we saw, exerts itself to maintain its own traditional life. Here we see the individual exerting himself to introduce relations within the society of which he is a member which, from the social standpoint, involve a modification of inherited beliefs and practices.

We may make a statement of this same contrast from the point of view of the problem of this chapter. Motive, we have defined in a general way as a complex feeling-motor experience which is centered in the consciousness of an end which has, or is intended to have, social consequences. The ends toward which motive points may and do vary with the different situations in which the moral judgment operates, but, as we saw in an earlier chapter the consequences may be reduced to definite types. Morality, we said, aimed at the maintenance and development of social life. Now, it is interesting to note, and it is at the same time a confirmation of the position taken, that the concepts which are the points of departure for discussion in this chapter refer to these two objects of moral effort. In the personal we have summed up those facts and relations which tend toward social maintenance. The individual subserves the interests of social development. Hence the problem which awaits our consideration is how these objects are secured in the motives which they are the means of establishing.

The concept 'individual' has received no more adequate consideration than, as we remarked above (p. 21), has the concept 'society,'

at the hands of modern sociology. The attitude of the sociologist, in both instances, is similar. Quite frankly Small affirms: "The concept 'individual' is one of our convenient concessions to our intellectual incapacity. In view of our mental limitations, it is doubtless a necessary device, but there is nothing in the world of reality to correspond with the notion which the term 'individual' is made to connote in [all the individualistic philosophies.]"<sup>1</sup> If we may take this confession as typical, one begins to wonder whether sociology has any legitimate business in the world, and whether it is not a sort of freebooter among the sciences taking what and where it can. But, seriously, if 'society' is only individuals affecting one another in various ways, as we saw above, and if, as we now learn, the 'individuals' are nothing real, sociology, certainly, can not be accused of lack of modesty in claiming to be the foundation of all our sciences of human nature. Perhaps we waste words; for so long as the sociologist does not put forth an appreciable effort to state what his terms do mean, and contents himself with denying that they mean what someone else says they mean, he is an 'Ephraim joined to idols' whom wisdom counsels to 'leave alone.' It is, therefore, much nearer the point to find the modern philosopher—Small seems to have stopped his reading of the philosophers with the eighteenth century—falling back upon the reality of the concrete individual, as determined by anthropology and social psychology, in his protest against the reality of the so-called 'social self.' For ethnology and psychology, the 'social self,' as Ladd affirms, "is but a figure of speech, fitly enough designed, it may be, to remind us that the individual man could never be, or develop into, a true personality were it not for the constant and most potent influence of other personal beings."<sup>2</sup> This author, however, does not draw the precise distinction connoted by the 'personal' and the 'individual,' and which we have essayed to point out. It may, therefore, help to make the line of distinction clearer if we throw into more stiff and exclusive statement what these terms specify. In regard to the personal, we should have to hold that it expresses, or is the way in which are expressed, the organic connections which the race maintains between its various divisions and members. Were there no such thing as a continuity of life in time there would be no such thing as sympathy uniting life in space. The solidarity of the race in its

<sup>1</sup> *Decennial Publications of the University of Chicago*, Vol. IV. p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> *Philosophy of Conduct*, p. 195.



psycho-physiological character forms the basis of what in the race divisions forms the material of those concrete developments in which one individual reproduces the life of his kind. This statement relieves our position from the onus which rests upon those who hold, as a friendly critic does, that the person "is a person when as yet the community has not touched him. He already has in him those elements which fit him to become a member of the community. They exist in embryo, to be sure, but they are there; and because they are there the child reacts on the influences from without, both material and social, as a person and not as a mere animal." We do not know what a 'mere animal' in this connection is, unless it denotes the individual member of the species determined as to racial characteristics by his psycho-physiological ancestry. But then the 'mere animal' must be equated with our 'person,' for we do not know anything whatever about any existence which 'as yet the community has not touched.' It is, indeed, the touch of the common life which gives life to the members of the race, tribe, family, so that in ascending series through family, tribe, and race it is true that 'like father, like son.' This may be asserted of mental as of physical and physiological characteristics. The beginning of the one is no more mysterious than the beginning of the other because we know nothing of the beginning of either. The (absolute) origin of matter is as far from being clear to us as is the origin of spirit because both lie in the unknown, where there are no measuring lines. The only existence we know is the psycho-physiological member of the race, and the 'mere animal' of biological science is as mythical a being as the 'pure spirit' of a theologising psychology. In the world of mysteries a newly spawned unicellular animal is as fearful and wonderful a thing as the birth of a human soul. Each is what its ancestry has determined, or else we do not know what it is. And when we have said this we have expressed the fundamental fact which, working out to very diverse results in each case, is the clue to the meaning of personality.

The individual also has its organic basis. "Every man is born to develop a peculiar organic structure of impulse and emotion, more of this and less of that, through the whole range of feelings. Such a structure varies inexhaustively from man to man, as faces and finger-prints do, and constitutes his character (the dominant tendencies of his reaction); so far as this can be distinguished, on the one hand, from behavior, which is determined partly by experience; and, on the other hand, from temperament, which

depends upon Cœnæsthesiſ.”<sup>1</sup> This statement is true in so far as it lays emphasis upon the connection between personality and individuality. Of these concepts, this author writes: “A man’s *personality* is inseparable from the family and its possessions and traditions; and hitherto it has been inseparable from the Tribe or State. There, on the other hand, grows up a consciousness of the relation of self to others, according to rules implying responsibility and defining the *individual*; on the other hand, suggestion, imitation, education, emulation and specialized industry and rank modify his *individuality* and disguise his character by codes of behavior. And further, since society is the greater part of every man’s environment, it operates selectively, eliminating those who fail to ‘behave,’ and thus determining possible types of character itself.”<sup>2</sup> What shall we say of the relation indicated between the personal and the individual? If ‘every man is born to develop a peculiar organic structure of impulse and emotion,’ it is obvious that the modifying and eliminating forces of the environment, social and material, which get expression in the latter part of the quotation, have been too strongly stated. We do not deny the influence of environment in the moral life; it is true that the funding of racial experience in the ‘social tissue,’ as Stephen indicates, may have been brought about under the operation of a law of selection. But the way in which this inheritance comes to be appropriated is the same as that which makes possible the appropriation of the objects of the ‘objective mind,’ or nature. As Read says, “Kinæsthesiſ accompanies all the special sensations, and becomes the connective tissue of the objective mind or nature.”<sup>3</sup> But also, as we have indicated, this may be affirmed to be the method of naturalization in the social order. Here, too, the social order as a fixed quantity operates as a stimulus to the process in which it comes to be known; and yet it must be added that what society is or appears to be must be stated, from the individual standpoint, in terms of the conative-affective qualities which condition practical adjustments. With the development of the life of thought, that is, when conduct is brought under the remote and contingent, the way for greater variation is opened up, and departure from mechanization of life becomes a possibility. Here is the basis of individuality. Something may be granted to the way in which the

<sup>1</sup> Read, *The Metaphysics of Nature*, p. 251.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 252, 253. Italics mine.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251.

elements are mixed in a given individual, for we must admit that what distinguishes one member of the race from another is wrought out through what is common to all. But unless we overlook the fact that life is not a deposit but a process, the emphasis must not be placed either upon inheritance or upon environment, but upon the way in which what is inherited is utilized in definite situations to bring about useful variations. Thus, ultimately, individuality is organically connected with the modifiability of inherited structure; and the determination of 'possible types of character,' which Read alludes to as the function of the environment, is as much dependent upon variation in reaction as it is upon conformity to type. The individual and environment grow together; but the higher we go in the scale of being the greater relative independence does the individual attain, that is, the larger the control which he exercises over the conditions under which his career is run.

We may now consider the development of motive under the influence of what we term the personal. This will take us back to the conclusion of the last chapter for our starting-point. It was there pointed out that memory is a conservative element in mental life, and, as we shall have occasion to emphasize, it is the instrument of the moral judgment in preserving to the individual his racial inheritance. For what we mean by law, tradition, or custom is the fact that society has its method of storing experience so as to make it available for future guidance. It should be remarked, however, that social memory, like imagination, abstracts from the concreteness of its practical original which is then preserved in a somewhat schematic form. Hence its dependence on the moral judgment for its social efficiency. In this point of view, the moral judgment may be said to consist in the determination of conduct with respect to the requirements which social experience embodies. In relation to motive, the problem is to ascertain how social can become individual experience. This much may be said, in a general way, that as the moral judgment implies and works through the social memory, it requires in the members of society a similar mental development—the ability to store and to profit by experience. Now memory as an individual characteristic



is a matter of images and ideas.<sup>1</sup> "A memory image may be described objectively as a mental image which resembles closely a former image, a real thing, or event. Subjectively regarded, memory images . . . are accompanied by the feeling of familiarity, or mood of at-homeness, as Titchener describes it, and also by the belief that the image relates to a real object, event, or situation, and still further by the consciousness that the object, event, or situation is not at the moment present to sense."<sup>2</sup> The importance of this definition is that it recognizes the wide scope which memory may take as to its content, and at the same time indicates the inner characteristics of the experience itself. Morality, in this connection, is concerned with the recall of social 'situations,' and it is the feeling-motor aspect of its memory-image which makes it dynamic in maintaining these situations. Hence, we may say, that through a common content of memory—the social situation—the judgment becomes functional in the individual through the feelings which it is capable of arousing.

We may now take a step farther and ask what are the complications in the feeling-motor consciousness which take place when the memory image serves as the medium of bringing the individual into relation with the social group. Let us take the typical case where the reproduction of past experience serves as the guide to action in a presented situation. Here we are called upon to do something which, from the standpoint of the individual, is intended to afford a definite satisfaction. The control, in this instance, is exercised by the content of the memory-image through which conduct is tied down to reproducing a remembered sequence. Through the image we get back to life—to its social contacts and moral effort.<sup>3</sup> It is the starting-point of a process of verification

<sup>1</sup> Ideas are not important at this stage, because, here the practical demands are those which get their fulfillment in conformity, and memory is usually adequate for the socializing of individual behavior. They are, however, a more fruitful medium of individuality, and lead out to all the wide diversity which that term connotes.

<sup>2</sup> Major, *First Steps in Mental Growth*, p. 202.

<sup>3</sup> Professor Baldwin writes me *à propos* of the article 'Imagination and Thought in Human Knowledge' (*Journal of Phil., Psy.*

which, if successful, reacts upon the image itself to give it definite characteristics. Because of its functional relations, the memory image drops what is irrelevant in the original experience when it comes to be applied in a problematical situation, and in becoming schematic its sphere of application is enlarged to include many situations which, though not identical, are sufficiently alike to be interpreted in a similar way. The importance of this fact in the development of motive is that the pleasure-pain connected with the kinæsthetic character of the original experience loses its point of attachment in the motor series, and is modified by the distinctive feelings which belong to the image-motor series which are now dynamic. This same truth may be expressed by saying that while in perception the affective element is in direct relation to the motor possibilities of the presented situation, it is not so in memory. In memory, because we have the advantage of the completed experience, the affective consequences react upon the affective accompaniments of the original conative process to make the motive more complex, a complexity which becomes emphasized and deepened with every new application and use of the memory-image. Memory is important morally because, in practice, it affords the opportunity of connecting the pleasure-pain factors of direct perceptual experience with those emotional results which accompany praise or blame which are the forms in which the moral judgment takes account of what we do. There is, therefore, in memory, as a moral instrument, already a transformation and modification of the elements

and *Sci. Meth.*, Vol. IV, p. 645f), that the place of what I call 'imagination'—in which term were included both reproductive and productive imagination—is 'one of the main problems' of his Genetic Logic (*Thought and Things*, Vol. I), and that "the theories of 'Image objects,' 'Semblance' and 'Schematism,' in that book, Chapters V, VI, VIII, give imagination the mediating place." The doctrine of the article is unchanged here, and I am glad to refer the reader to Baldwin's treatment for its logical implications. The reading should be continued to Vol. II, where the matter is carried on to the sphere of truth. The same subject has been considered by Baldwin in an article on 'Knowledge and Imagination,' in *The Psychological Review* for May 1908, pp. 181f.

of the original experience to the extent that no repetition of previous behavior can take place in actual life which does not bring upon it a moral valuation. To do the same thing twice needs justifying. The reason is that the motive in the two instances is not the same. Moral motive is not possible until the pleasure-pain experience has been absorbed into the emotional response which comes from regard for the social consequences of our several acts. Regard for consequences would not be possible, and the distinctive character of moral motive would be absent, were it not for that mental development in memory which ties us to the past in order that we may know more surely how to tread the unknown way of the future.

Not only in moral theory, but in practical life, Hedonism has played a conspicuous part. By Hedonism we mean any view of morality which holds that men behave in the concrete situations of their life in the way they do for the sake of the pleasure which the behavior affords. According to this, I am writing, and the reader is reading these pages because the psycho-physical activity which is, respectively, ours is in each case pleasurable. When it ceases to give pleasure, I throw down the pen, as you do the book, and that is the end of the matter. The widespread acquiescence in this account lays a heavy burden of responsibility not only on those who hold the view, but also on those who would discredit it. The same reason, however, weighs with both—the statement of the theory is so perfectly obvious and easily understood. With the practical man, this is a necessity. If he is to have any theory of conduct, as he must have, it has to be one which bears its meaning on its face, and is capable of immediate application to the affairs of life. A man is practical, in the common meaning of language, when, so far as he is concerned, no delay is allowed between desire and its satisfaction. There are, of course, questions which arise, and which for the time, prevent the accomplishment of plans; but, unless we go beyond the sphere of practice, they are, and can be, only those which are concerned with the means and not the end of his activity. The business world is an obvious example. No one disputes that here we have an organization for the purpose of making money; its justification lies in the success with which it attains this end. Here is preëminently the place and the sphere of the practical man. Let it be suggested that commercial enterprise is only



indirectly related to wealth, but has for its direct object the enlargement of life, and you have turned the world of the practical man upside-down. The problems with which he deals do not suggest, even remotely, the possibility of subordinating financial success; they present themselves, rather, as requiring a more adequate development of the means of a secure and rapid accumulation of wealth. We offer this as a statement of fact. Our point is quite distinct from the question whether the facts and relations of the business world, as such, are capable of an ethical valuation. With regard to this we should certainly consider it so. This, we take it, is the opinion of all those also who, whether they be moralists or statesmen, think there is a better way of doing business than by keeping an eye on the till. In this relation, President Roosevelt is the leading statesman of our modern American life, because in him we have a strong will illuminated and guided by clear moral vision. There is, for instance, no 'politics,' but good business and moral sense in this: "The rich man who with hard arrogance declines to consider the rights and needs of those who are less well off, and the poor man who excites and indulges in envy and hatred of those who are better off, are alike alien to the spirit of our national life. Each of them should learn to appreciate the baseness and degradation of his point of view, as evil in the one case as in the other. There exists no more sordid and unlovely type of social development than plutocracy, for there is a peculiar unwholesomeness in a social and governmental ideal where wealth by and of itself is held up as the greatest good."<sup>1</sup> It is because, as a matter of fact, wealth is held up as the greatest good in the business world that the practical man lives a short-circuited life. He lives mostly through his spinal cord, and the cerebrum does not exist to set new aims, but to meet the complexity of situations which the spinal cord is not able to overcome. Now, if we speak to a man whose contacts with his environment are of this immediate sort of moral theory, we must give him a short-circuited theory—he can understand no other. Now, this is what Hedonism is. It belongs to and finds meaning in the inchoate stage of moral life, the stage of the non-moral, of the moral by courtesy, and because there the conditions are developing which later become of service in the transmuting of values in which, as we have seen, morality, to so large an extent, consists.

The reason which commends this theory to the practical man

<sup>1</sup> Provincetown (Mass.) Speech, August 20, 1907.

is the reason the moral theorist has for rejecting it. Much has been written, and written well, upon Hedonism as a theory of the moral life. But the best things that have been written, and this is true of the Hedonists themselves, are the things which have contradicted it. Thus when Mill admitted the distinction between higher and lower pleasures he introduced into Hedonism the entering wedge which, if forced, would divide it against itself. We refer to Mill because, in this concession, he seems to have had warrant of the facts of life when brought under moral review. When the Hedonist, as theorist, does what, as practical man, he could not do—when, that is, he takes the look before and after—blind immediacy no longer appears as a characteristic of the best types of moral existence. But if the facts change, so does the theory; and when the pleasures, for example, of the intellect are placed over against the pleasures of sense, we have not merely a question of more or less, but a difference in the kind of life which morality connotes.<sup>1</sup> To connect this distinction with our exposition, those pleasures which act as motives to future conduct are higher when they are connected with the consequences which follow in a social way the completion of the individual act. They are not only more complex, but because they are more complex they initiate the means which lead to their fulfillment. The forms of behavior to which they lead are moral because, as we said in the beginning and in many ways have repeated throughout this essay, they are mediated by those forms of feeling which are capable of the widest socialization. Brought to this test, Hedonism is discredited. Feeling which terminates in the individual, and is not the medium of wider social consequences, is not the motive which has brought, however imper-

<sup>1</sup> This statement should be taken in connection with what was said above concerning the relation of the elementary pleasure-pains to the moral motive. We do not find that, in themselves, the so-called lower pleasures are contradictory of the best life, any more than, in themselves, the higher pleasures are promotive of it. What we have to recognize is that a new direction and use is made of the feeling-motor consciousness when we pass from the biological to the ethical life. Indeed, it is the silence of ethics upon the place of the organic instincts in the scheme of existence, or its wholly negative and ascetic treatment of them, that gives occasion to that duality of motive which figures in and discredits our modern life, and which, in making goodness to appear as a gloss, justifies, in reality, their unregulated satisfaction.

fectly, the future under the control of the present, and made of the present the seed plot of human destiny.<sup>1</sup>

We shape ourselves the joy or fear,  
Of which the coming life is made,  
And fill our future's atmosphere  
With sunshine or with shade.

The simplest and most elementary type of moral motive is that through which the common interests, the fundamental and organic needs, of communal life are met. This is the motive which promotes those qualities of conduct and of character which most nearly bind the members of society together, and unite them in an inclusive purpose. All that we have said concerning the development and applications of motive in this and the preceding chapter centers in this purpose. Whether we consider the first budding forth of the moral life in children or childlike races, or whether we view it from the more advanced stage where memory makes a more indirect method of control possible, the object which the motive in these cases supports is that which is summed up in the

<sup>1</sup> Business life is not the only sphere of human activity which is carried on without consideration of its moral implications. Culture also has its dangers; and an education divorced from the service of man is only a refined form of selfishness, and may become the instrument of oppression more terrible than any of the clumsy devices known to despotism. It killed the body, an unmoralized culture kills the soul. The following from Ruskin may serve as an illustration: "I have bought for my own exclusive gratification the cottage in which I am writing, near the lake-beach on which I used to play when I was seven years old. Were I a public-spirited scientific person or a benevolently pious one, I should doubtless instead be surveying the geographical relations of the mountains of the moon, or translating the Athanasian creed into Tartar-Chinese. But I hate the very name of the public, and labor under no oppressive anxiety either for the advancement of science or the salvation of mankind. I, therefore, prefer amusing myself with the lake-pebbles, of which I know nothing but that they are pretty, and conversing with people whom I can understand without pains, and who, so far from needing to be converted, seem to me on the whole better than myself."—From Harris, *God Creator and Lord of All*, Vol. II, p. 431, note 1.



term 'personal.' We have looked at the facts, hitherto, from the side, and according to the advantages of society, and, very properly, it has seemed that, in relation to the moral life, society appears as an organization for the objective control of the individual, to direct his steps, and to give him exercise in the things which make for the larger life. There is, however, in the later stages of this discipline a moment when social demands appear less as tasks that cannot be avoided without pain, and more as opportunities which contain the promise of fulfilling personal needs. The reason for this is bound up in our exposition, and it appears, in a general statement, as a particular application of the truth that the subject and his environment grow up together and can not be taken apart. The law of morality, consequently, is not, in the sense in which some ethical schools have held, a heteronomy, and it appears so at any time only because it remains steady and insistent, while there are many other competing outlets for the active energies of the unregulated and imperfectly integrated life of immaturity. Freedom from restraint, however, is as much dependent, especially in the elementary stages, upon the inhibition of competing activities as upon the consent which the moral law receives. For, doubtless, the more and better training one gets in obedience to the commands of the moral law, the less chance remains to other incompatible modes of action to get stamped in and to become established habits of life.

Practice, I say, my friend, doth long endure  
And at the last is even very nature.<sup>1</sup>

The fact to which we wish to call attention is this: that the ends defined by society as objects of the individual's moral effort are the reality which, in the individual, the moral feelings point to, and in which they receive their satisfaction. The meaning of this is that the motive has become, at least in part, independent of the social sanctions which, hitherto, have secured moral behavior. With the development of memory, we become

<sup>1</sup> Evenus, quoted by Aristotle, *Ethics*, Book VII, Chapter 9.

relatively independent of the suggestion of our immediate environments for the determination of our courses of conduct, and we find in experience—which in ethical terms signifies character—the clue to the behavior which these concrete situations demand. When, however, as an incident of mental and moral growth, we are thus thrown upon our resources it should be remembered that the experience upon which we are thrown, and from which we have to select the key for the unlocking of the future, is not some private, fortuitous experience, but, definitively, those forms of behavior which have been learned from society as the things which it demands of us if we look for moral approbation. Hence it is obvious that with the shifting of the emphasis from social control to moral initiative, the presumption is in favor of the right thing getting done—the thing the individual does will be an approved form of moral conduct. If, therefore, we inquire, from the standpoint of the subject of conduct, why that gets done which the individual does, we can only say that that is the thing the individual *wants* to do. The occasion provides an outlet for action, and the action can be, when memory serves as a bridge, no other than that which already implies, through the motive by which it is supported, the approval of the moral judgment. For, as we said, the moral motive is the moral judgment functioning in the individual to secure those types of behavior which best interpret and embody the moral ideal.

The remarkable statement of Kant's in the *Metaphysic of Morals* that inclination destroys the moral quality of the resulting action seems to deserve brief notice. The subject of discussion in which he states his position is the content, or the field of operation, of the 'Good-will.' What is the character of those actions which are done from good-will, and how wide a field do such actions cover? Kant brings to the consideration of this question his conception of duty as the requirement embodied in the moral law. Thus, he says, only those acts are moral which are done from a sense of duty, that is, because the moral law requires them. But this does not cover all human actions. There are, besides, those acts which are inconsistent with duty, and those which, although what duty requires, are done because one takes

pleasure in them. The former are easily disposed of; although, as we may pause to remark, not quite consistently with any theory which undertakes to apply moral predicates to them. But it becomes a nice question whether, because and when inclination and duty, as in particular cases they sometimes do, coincide, we are to refuse, as Kant apparently does, to recognize these as falling under a moral denomination. Thilly makes a curious observation when he says that the question is wholly 'dependent upon one's standpoint.'<sup>1</sup> We do not think this is so; for whatever our standpoint the facts should be correctly stated, even if they need to be supplemented by facts gathered from other standpoints. What, therefore, is the fact which Kant had in mind when he ruled out this class of actions from the field of morality? No one, for instance, can suppose that he would have approved the selection of examples in Schiller's famous parody of his doctrine, in which the poet by means of these examples reduces the position to absurdity. The parody, in English, runs as follows:

The friends whom I love I gladly would serve, but to this inclination incites me;  
 And so I am forced from virtue to swerve since my act, through affection, delights me.  
 The friends whom thou lovest thou must first seek to scorn, for to no other way can I guide thee;  
 'Tis alone with disgust thou canst rightly perform the acts to which duty would lead thee.

But why not? Because—to meet a paradoxical situation paradoxically—these are not the things we do because we like to do them. The examples mentioned very often and most characteristically involve hardship and difficulty. They cannot be, therefore, the bearers of the motive from which they receive their moral support. And, in this, we are confirmed by Kant's own statements. For while he recognizes the feeling of respect for the law as the motive of all moral actions, he is careful to say that respect is an effect of the law and not its cause. This was, from the historic standpoint, a direct thrust at the hedonism of his times, in combating which he was led into an extreme and unguarded statement. What his statement amounts to, then, is that that feeling—which he calls inclination—which finds its satisfaction in the actions which it immediately occasions is not to be confused with the moral motive which is an organization of the feeling

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction to Ethics*, p. 107.



life around the ends which the moral law holds up as the objects of a moral will. It will be seen that this interpretation of Kant brings him nearer to the position for which we have argued. But the two views are not identical. For there still remains the hiatus between feeling and action, and conduct is recognized to be moral only when it is enforced behavior. The fact is Kant's psychology is all at sea in this connection. The distinction which he draws between the two kinds of will (*Wille* and *Willkühr*) has its counterpart in the distinction of 'inclination' and 'respect,' and in neither case has he made provision for the lower to be taken up into the higher, with the result that the moral life is a thing apart in disjunctive relation with the common stream of the individual's life. We may say, with Paulsen, that 'such a human being, doing his duty solely for duty's sake, is the most wooden mannikin ever constructed by a system-builder.'<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, in its positive features, the doctrine of Kant is a close approximation to the facts, but because of what it excludes it fails to provide for some of the characteristics of the moral life. For, after all, the good man, as Aristotle pointed out,<sup>2</sup> is the man who likes to do good things. Inclination and duty must find their reconciliation somewhere in the moral life. In our doctrine of motive this reconciling process is shown to be going on all the time, and thus the moral life is shown to be growing constantly richer because it is infolding within itself as secondary ends the objects which, on Kant's view, are constantly distracting the moral will from its proper moral ends.

Turning now to the consideration of the individual, we meet with an important transitional stage where, within the field of application of the memory-image, the way is being prepared for the distinctive uses of image and idea which are characteristic of imagination. We have spoken of the part that memory plays in determining conduct in a problematical situation. It was pointed out that we need not go beyond the means offered in memory for the control of those situations which, although differing from any past experience, were sufficiently like them to be assimilated to one or other of the types which had become fixed through repetition. Our position in regard to such cases was that the field of the per-

<sup>1</sup> *A System of Ethics*, translated by F. Thilly, p. 351.

<sup>2</sup> *Ethics*, Book I, Chapter X.

sonal is determined by the range of the applicability of the memory image as a principle for the guidance of conduct. It can, therefore, be readily understood that the determination of the ethical characteristics of the individual will depend upon where, in the development of mental and moral life, memory no longer serves as a guide to practice without undergoing modification to meet the greater complexity which the new situation implies. Now, it needs only to be pointed out that memory is serviceable in so far as it retains the essential characteristics of the original experience, and connects these with the moral judgments which either approve or condemn. There are a number of recurring situations—such, for example, that, in current expression, go by the term ‘manners’—which become very completely formalized, and which when once their requirements have been learned may be left to the mechanism of memory for their reinstatement. We learn to observe the social amenities in much the same way in which we learn to speak our mother tongue. They are, indeed, the idiom of our social class. Elementary morality is of this type. But appearances are proverbially deceptive, and one of the first lessons that has to be learned is that differences may sometimes be overlooked because of more inclusive likeness. In this way the memory-image becomes more definitely formalized. Hence the practical expertness which is frequently shown in assimilating diverse situations to the image-type by those who have given hardly a thought to the problems which vex the soul of the moral philosopher. The fact seems to be that memory reacts upon perception, and the essentials of experience which are summed up in the image provide the clue to the behavior which the situation requires. It can be seen, however, that this is a safe procedure only within limits. When social conditions are more complex, and the relations more involved, differences become more emphatic and common likeness serves only to make them more problematical. Take, for example, the stock question whether one should, under all circumstances, speak the truth. Not many of us would hesitate as to the answer we would give. But few of us would as readily express the same judgment if we were asked whether the physician attending one of our own loved ones should

tell his patient that the sickness was mortal when the probability is that the news would either be fatal or hasten the demise. The point to be attended to is that they are the differences in the cases which accentuate the limitations of the function of memory in cases of casuistry. But even before this stage of development is reached, it is possible that memory has proved a limited instrument of the moral life. For one may find out very early that while other things remain the same the time element itself may make all the difference. So the child who asks whether she may have some candy, will receive a scolding if the permission is taken to extend beyond the occasion to which it originally referred. Such a case is instructive because, as any one who has to do with children may verify, the child will most likely resent the correction with the justifying remark—'You said I could.' And if, as sometimes happens, the emphasis is put on 'said,' the child is standing up for her own moral standards, and pointing you out as the one who has broken 'the law.' But if it is told her that the case of candy is not one that can safely be left to her to decide, this will mean that there are some circumstances which her standards do not take account of, and which, therefore, must lead her wrong. And when any exception is made, the limits of memory have been already reached, and some new way of dealing with the excepted cases is in demand.

We may look at the development of imagination in its practical use in another way. Careful observers have remarked upon the importance of social contact if the child is to make mental and moral progress. The more social groups to which the child can get adjusted, the more diversified will be his acquired reactions. It is instructive, and not infrequently amusing, to observe the different modes of behavior of the same child under the changing social conditions into which he comes in the course of a day. All this is significant for the future of the child because it is in his imitative reactions that he not only gets his social introductions, but finds the material which, preserved in memory, serves as the guide to future behavior. Practically, therefore, memory may be viewed as being concerned with the conscious application of imitative mate-



rial. Now the limits of this growth era are reached when mistakes begin to appear, and we are sent back, like children at school, with our examples marked 'wrong.' A typical case of this arises when the standards of one social relation are used to solve the problems which arise in another social relation to which, because of the neglect of important differences, they are not pertinent. There is no escape from this. As much as possible must be assimilated to a single type. In this sense, memory illustrates the law of parsimony in mental life. But when memory is extended into areas where, because the conditions have become more complex, it proves ineffective, the necessity of imagination is emphasized if social readjustment is to take place. Hence, whatever else it may be, imagination, from the practical standpoint, is a mental device for dealing with situations which, because they depart from a fixed type, are no longer capable of control by memory through which what is permanent in common situations gets reënforcement.

While it does not belong to an ethical inquiry to consider in detail the genetic history of memory and imagination, except so far as it may throw light upon the growth, in scope and complexity, of the moral life, it is pertinent to call attention to the traditional psychological view which was developed under influences which regarded facts of all kinds as definite quantities to be analyzed with a view to their adequate description. This, in psychology, led to the differentiation of memory and imagination both in respect of their relations to perception and in respect of the complexity of their organization. This view laid stress upon the following considerations: (a) memory and imagination both presuppose perception; (b) imagination differs from memory in being less representative of its perceptual origin; and this (c) is somehow connected with the greater degree of vivacity of the memory-image. These positions are substantially correct. But, notwithstanding the show of thoroughness which the traditional view has always carried, it only affords a determination of the representative consciousness in a single dimension. Thus (b) and (c) above are accurately corollaries from the temporal relations in which perception, memory, and imagination are said to stand to one another in mental life. Thus Hume taking perception—or the 'impression of sense'—as the original fact of experience, is able to distinguish imagination from memory as the copy of

a copy, and, consistently enough, accords to memory, which is the copy of the original, a more definite constitution. But if the difference between perception, memory, and imagination is, wholly or in part, a matter of which is original and which is copy, it is obvious, inferentially, that the copy of a copy can be neither as representative nor as vivid as the copy. But whatever limitations the doctrine may be subject to, the common view is, as we said, substantially correct. We find, for example, in Hume's exposition the *locus classicus* of the position which has been advanced above that memory and imagination afford the means for the developing consciousness, mental and moral, to retain its vital connections with the concrete environments in which truth and righteousness come to their first expression. We also find here the germ of the view that, in characteristic ways, memory and imagination make possible the growth of human knowledge and morality, and function in the interest of the greater diversity of their form and scope. There is one point which we should note, namely, the detachableness from its concrete original of the image in imagination. This, according to Hume, is due to the fact that imagination retains in more schematic outline than memory the concrete inter-relations of the parts of the primary perception. In our view this is to put the cart before the horse. Imagination, as we have seen, differs from memory not in its structure, but in the use to which the image is put. Hence, as we have implied, the memory image, when it is used as a means for overcoming a situation which refuses to be assimilated to a common type, is, so far, an imagination-image. It is doubtless true that the schematization of the image proceeds with the number of differences which it mediates, but this is the result, not the cause, of its separation from the perceptual or imitative origin to which it refers. It is for this reason that we find the beginning of imagination in memory; not because, structurally, imagination differs from memory; but because, functionally, memory lends itself, within limits, to the kind of service which imagination carries out in a freer way and over larger areas of conscious experience. The instrument is shaped to existing needs, and gets perfected through the demands which are made upon it in the complicating situations of social intercourse.

The development of imagination has been traced with reference to those cases in which memory breaks down because it is no longer able to cope with existing situations in a morally satisfactory way. Two instances were mentioned: first, when the individual is begin-

ning to appropriate new aspects of community life, and finds his old experience failing him as a guide to what ought to be done; second, when contrasted social relations are beginning to overlay one another, and the attempt is made to assimilate the one to the other. Each of these in its own way marks the limits of the memory function in the moral situation, and by emphasizing differences opens the way for a new step in mental and moral growth. Mentally, as we have seen, differences are controlled by imagination. The greater the number and complexity of significant differences, the more emphatic and characteristic are the variations of conduct. In this way conduct not only becomes enriched, but finds in change the condition of its own permanence. Since this statement is true of both the cases above, they remain transitional in the sense that imagination is not freed from its contextual dependence, but functions within the limits of the memory-scheme. It becomes a question, however, how much diversity can be admitted without going beyond established custom. Perhaps the least that can be said is that what has the sanction of tradition may be done in new ways, and the most, that new behavior will be permitted which can be assimilated by the old formulas. The morality of the average person will, we think, be found to lie within these bounds. We may sum up the case in the statement that because memory and imagination are coöperant factors in the solution of moral problems, individuality is seen to further the interests of the personal and to set them on firmer foundations. By preventing stagnation it contributes to moral permanence.

In face of the facts which lead to the view just stated, what changes, if any, take place in the character of the motive which underlies this stage of moral growth? The most obvious incident here is that an element of uncertainty is introduced, and we are not so sure as we were that desire will meet with its fulfillment. There is something analogous to this in all transitional eras. We noticed something similar when we were considering the progress from the inchoate to the definitely moral period of growth. It is worth while to emphasize that this uncertainty is not an accident, but an



essential element of progress. It provides the condition of that deepening and strengthening of the feeling-motor consciousness which comes through the introduction into it of new elements. And this is what we noticed here. The outward, practical consolidation of the new with the old—the possibility of this is exactly the question involved at this stage—can become an established social fact only when the existing motive is capable of such modification that it can appropriate the feeling-motor consciousness which is the psychological *raison d'être* of the separate, independent existence of the unassimilated item of conduct. We have an inkling of this when we say, for example, that no social, just as no legal, demand can be enforced which does not receive the moral support of the community. For what does this mean? Does it not mean that the motive underlying the demand must be assimilated to the existing motive forces so that, as a new moral force, it shall secure to this demand its place in the social order? Unless it means this, it is not obvious that anything is meant. But, meaning this, what do we find as the positive feature of this hesitancy and uncertainty which the limitations of memory seem so well to introduce? It is not merely or only the arrest of an accustomed reaction, any more than the functioning of imagination here implies the abeyance of memory. As, on the mental side, we have two memory-images thrown into partial opposition, so, on the moral, two motive-reactions are inhibiting each other, and preventing either's fulfillment. This conflict of factors, both mental and moral, gives a moment of pause which is significant of readjustment, and from it we emerge with new strength, fuller powers, a broader outlook, and a richer experience. In all this our center is not changed, but there is greater freedom from the restraint of custom, and the mechanism which is the characteristic of the moral life at the lower level, is displaced by a more consciously directive purpose. The termination of conduct is still within the conventional, but the conventional is fulfilled *con amore* by reason of the greater flexibility of the motive which is secured by moral growth.

We are ready now to make a further advance. We have considered those cases where differences are not so radical that they

cannot be controlled on behalf of the common interests which center in the personal. This subordination of differences to the uniform type for which the group stands is capable of quite wide extension, but unless a somewhat free attitude is maintained toward the unfamiliar and the untried, an accentuation of contrasts will be precipitated, and the new will be thrown into opposition, with the result that it gains a consciousness of itself which up to now was entirely lacking. This may be brought about in either of two ways which, probably, mark stages in the development of the individual. First, whatever renders society inhospitable toward the new—whether it be an extreme conservatism which ties to the past, or whether it be a more positive opposition toward change—will, when carried to a certain length, precipitate a crisis which can be overcome only by expelling the intractable element which society refuses or has failed to assimilate. In general, what we refer to as the unprogressiveness of oriental civilization is due to the close inter-relationship of the various orders of society, under a common ancestor who is not merely a world-ruler, but a race-divinity.<sup>1</sup> In such a society the progressive factor which we identify with individual initiative is not possible, or if possible, it appears with the odds tremendously against it, which in most instances means that it is strangled at its birth. Of such civilizations may be said, what we say of one of our own number when we wish to

<sup>1</sup> Since we shall maintain later on that imagination gets its own unique forms of organization, and functions through the individual to secure moral conformity, it may avoid misunderstanding to point out that it makes all the difference *where* one's social ideal is found. Our criticism of oriental civilization is not that it is well organized, but that because it gets its inspiration in an ideal which does not admit of indefinite growth, it is bound to an inflexible type of existence which must end in deterioration, stagnation, and death. Popularly expressed, the difference is whether the moral ideal is a summary of the past, or whether it is an anticipation of the future. The same contrast marks oriental and occidental religion. Buddhism, for example, is a device for negating the effects of historic life in the interests of an unrealized good; Christianity presents an unrealized good working in time for the redemption of the historic life of the individual and of the race.

pass criticism on extreme stupidity, that they have no imagination. Old Japan affords an example of this type of social organization. In summing up his chapter which deals with this subject Lafcadio Hearn remarks: "Personality (individuality in our terminology) is wholly suppressed by coercion; and the coercion is chiefly from within, not from without—the life of every individual being so ordered by the will of the rest as to render free action, free speaking, or free thinking, out of the question. This means something incomparably harsher than the socialistic tyranny of early Greek society: it means religious communism doubled with a military despotism of the most terrible kind. The individual did not legally exist, —*except for punishment*."<sup>1</sup> Individualistic modes of behavior, especially in the early stages of moral development, have always been considered dangerous because, as we are able to see, the intellectual means have not, as yet, been developed for the control of the situations in which they occur. But, as was pointed out, there are stages in the development of the individual which are hardly distinguishable from those more advanced stages in which the personal is the dominating factor. At first, divergencies must be brought under the restraining influences of established moral habit if they are not to work disastrously to all concerned; but this implies the modification of the original or parent social order which is possible only within limits. When, however, society has become immobile, or when the individual factors have undergone preternatural growth, parturition takes place through rupture, and because there is no social order into which the individual may be received, his importance, both by himself and by others, is in danger of being very much over-estimated.

The atomic individual is always a forced product, the responsibility for which lies with society. He is also a social nuisance and moral menace. There is hardly anything second in importance, for our American life, to a clear apprehension, by all the people, of the conditions which make him a possibility. That is a sane moral judgment which holds that the family, for instance, which does not grow with the growth of its several members, can hardly

<sup>1</sup> *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation*, pp. 277, 278. Italics mine.



be thought of as best fulfilling its social and moral responsibilities. And yet how many families innocently (*sic*) turn their adolescent boys and girls on to the streets, or permit their associating in mixed companies, because forsooth, to keep them at home would require some readjustment of the domestic economy. The 'gang,' for example, is a promiscuous association of boys who have been abandoned by their families, and the dancing hall is filled with girls whose parents think they have fulfilled all the law and the prophets when they have purchased a few flimsy dresses and tawdry trinkets. At the stage we are considering, there is no doubt that the problem of morality is the problem of the parent; and no reform could well be more wholesome than that which awoke us out of our good-natured indifference, and presented the duties of parenthood as a high and noble calling which comes to its reward in the third generation.

We may refer, in this connection, to some of the characteristics which belong to the adolescent period. There is here the breaking up of old ties, the restiveness under restraint, the felt lack of appreciation from others, the abandonment to what is new as that which has the promise of life,—all of which, we are told, occur as the detached experiences of maturing youth. The outstanding feature is the lack of continuity which, on the positive side, is marked by the budding forth and pursuit of many diverse interests. Whether it covers a short time, as in the individual; or extends over longer periods, as in the race; whether it comes with the rush of a new found energy, or appears with slower steps, the problem it presents in moral theory is not materially altered. Perhaps it would be safe to affirm that at the longest it is but an incident, and when it seems most deliberate there is at the heart of it an impatience to be born. It is the period of romanticism. New faiths are matured in a day, new ideals blossom as crocuses under a spring-time sun, great enterprises are conceived at the wave of its fairy wand. Moreover, nothing is impossible, except the established order of things; and nothing is wrong except the teachings of a hoary experience. And yet, we could not well spare this epoch; for if it raises no superstructure, it broadens foundations, and if its achievements are mostly destructive, it matures the powers by which, when the storm and stress have passed, worthy things may be accomplished. It is, very largely, a fruitless age; but, we are to remember that seed time belongs to youth, and if some tares are sown with the wheat, and the labor of harvest is thereby increased, the garnered crop remains. Only that there may be a happy harvest, the whole period needs to be wisely brought under social restraint.

Second, not all differences can be handled in the way we have supposed, because there are normal limits to the growth of every society beyond which it can not go without losing its characteristic qualities. The problem is a broad one, and concerns the segregation of social groups with their distinctive organization and life.<sup>1</sup> Whatever theory may be held of the facts, it cannot be doubted that the problem is forced by the growing complexity of the conditions of social intercourse, by every advance that is made toward a differentiation of interests, and by a specialization of the means for meeting human needs. So long as society is adequate to the demands which get expressed in its several members a certain amount of development is possible, and if we do not attain a very high order of civilization, we have laid the foundation for that future progress in which new types of character emerge. For if, as we have seen, the personal is grounded in what is common, the individual comes to its most perfect expression when, by organization, separate groups of interests are brought into contrast by emphasizing different demands and by supplying distinct means for their gratification. We are likely to miss a great deal of the moral significance of this because, before we have attained the period of reflective self-consciousness, we have become adjusted, in a practical way, to the varying demands of our differing relations, and it appears, for this reason, to be the normal order of things. The fact, for the average adult, is that there exists no problem because his ability to satisfy the requirements of his several associations meets with little or no interference from the perception of their mutual opposition. To such an extent do we live a segmented life that the fact that a man is a good father has very little appreciable influence on the fact that he is at the same time a good, bad, or indifferent business or professional man. It would not be difficult to find examples of the social lion who is the domestic bore.

The ease with which such facts as these are acknowledged suggests that, as a matter of history, morality has taken the line of

<sup>1</sup> On this subject the reader may be referred to Wundt's *Ethics*, Part IV, "The Departments of the Moral Life."

least resistance. By this we mean that since morality does not exist apart from practice, but in practice is wrought out and embodied, we cannot look among the facts of the moral life for anything corresponding to that unity and consistency which is the demand made by the theoretical understanding upon life. Practice insists that differences be taken account of with the least hindrance to present interests, and morality, for the most part, is allied with the conservative forces of community life. But when differences become emphatic, that is, when new interests develop which are, or appear to be, incompatible with the old, they may be brought under control, and the danger which is always felt to belong to them may be reduced, by allowing them a distinct sphere of influence in which to operate as the nuclei of separate memory-systems in which their significance and value as different are to a large extent overcome. Now, this movement can take place only when the image, which at this stage is the instrument of moral organization, is, to use Baldwin's term, 'liftable.' Here the image has finally broken with its concrete perceptual original, and has gathered to itself a new meaning developed in the course of experience, which meaning it now definitely stands for. This is what takes place not only once and in one instance, but many times and in many instances in the history of the race. There may be, therefore, as many separate ideal-systems as there are separate organized interests. Nor need we be more concerned with the relations which these systems bear to one another, than, in practice, we are solicitous of bringing the various interests into harmonious agreement with one another. The fact seems to be that when the image has freed itself from perception and taken on a distinctive meaning, it has exhausted its negative features, and functions in society henceforth in very much the same way as a memory-image does; that is, to maintain the interests which are now centered in it. In general terms, all images, once they have become established, exist as means by which we get back the experiences, or get back to the experiences, in which they had their origin. It is not surprising therefore, that when the imagination-image is fixed as an inde-



pendent item of the mental life it continues as an instrument for mediating the new experiences which cannot be assimilated by the old memory-systems, and giving to these a standing which, without it, they would be unable to secure. Thus while life becomes greatly diversified, its chief characteristic is its externality; and while there may not be any consciousness of inner contradiction, the larger organization thus secured is in unstable equilibrium.

In the light of this exposition we may gain some insight into the conditions which make possible what may be referred to as the moral inconsistencies, for example, of the leaders of our modern industry. A considerable amount of criticism has been indulged, and we have no desire to continue the whipping of a whipped dog. The facts come before us here as an ethical problem, that is, for understanding. And when they are approached in this way, the problem which they present seems to be grievously misunderstood if due consideration is not given to the conditions out of which the facts arise. We have had a period of wonderful economic development along many lines, the changes incident to the readjustment to present needs have been many and far-reaching, and the confidence of the people in themselves was never stronger. New ideals in government, in commerce, in social, and even in moral and religious life have taken the imagination captive. It may be said that in all this very little attention has been given to the bearing that what is done and sanctioned in one line may have upon what is done and sanctioned in another. In fact, the sanction of success has been industriously applied throughout, and we have been, as under any such sanction we must be, negligent or indifferent to what is going on outside the direct interests involved. Comparing results, it does not appear that we have failed more egregiously in business than we have in morality to secure our moorings in the experience of the past, nor that we have accomplished more in religion than in government, perhaps not as much, toward constructing a comprehensive ideal which shall secure for our national life a normal and steady progress. The fact is that the work of moral consolidation belongs to the future; but the thing to regret in the situation is that it is only here and there among the leaders of their fellows that one is found who even dreams that the task of the present is to formulate a plan and to generate the motives of an inclusive righteousness; yet, even now, some things may be said. Socially, we must

get back to the sincerities of life; educationally, we must go forward toward a liberalizing culture; religiously, we must be unafraid of our freedom as the children of God. In each case there is a moral protest: socially, against the tyranny of fashion; educationally, against the tyranny of success; religiously, against the tyranny of tradition. Unless, as Carlyle has taught us, we can utter *our* 'Everlasting No,' how can we utter *our* 'Everlasting Yea'?

We have now considered the 'individual' in the various relations which it sustains to the imagination as it develops to meet the needs of an increasingly complex social organization. We saw (a) that imagination is at first only a particular form of memory through which are preserved certain acquired variations from conventional behavior. Here were noticed two cases neither of which sets up an opposition to, but tends to the modification and growth of the established morality. The first referred to those instances where implied distinctions become explicit through the consequences which develop when essential differences are overlooked. In this way we learn that the moral order is more complex than our memory-system has made it to appear. The development of the memory-system, then, takes place to meet the discovered limitation, and it becomes adequately representative by incorporating the special differences on which the case depends. The other case is more complex, though similar. Social relations within the group overlap, and in the interests of simplification we try to assimilate the one to the other. This is a legitimate endeavor, as it looks toward better organization, and whenever it is possible without blotting out important distinctions, its success is a distinctive gain. An illustration may be given from the home. The characteristic feature of the home is that it is the center of a system of relations that in their nature involve the principle of identity-difference which is the principle of intellectual and moral growth. The fundamental relationships that are defined by the home are always *correlatives*. Hence, parent-child, brother-sister, sister-brother, uncle-nephew, aunt-niece, etc. Each of these pairs of terms may, of course, be read the other way; each term of the relation implies the other. But the parent-child rela-

tion is determinative throughout. An identity of blood relationship underlies all the differences mediated by the home. Now these obvious facts condition not only what each member of the family may do, but also what it is possible for each one to think. Thinking, that is to say, is determined for all members of the family by the particular relationship which for the time being is operative. But every other term is subordinately functional at the same time, and at any moment may become operative—ideally—in modifying the customary behavior in any given relation. This is seen even in so fundamental a relation as that between parent and child. This relation is interpreted aright only when it stands for authority on the one side and obedience on the other. The brother-sister relation, and every other relation based on more remote kinship, place their subjects more nearly on a footing of equality. The give-and-take in these cases is not nearly so well prescribed as in the parent-child relation. In the latter, restrictions as to behavior are obvious, whatever their sanctions or methods of enforcement. We, thus, have two general groups within the one family life which play back and forth on one another in the consciousness of the child, and which, through the process of adjustment, secure the intellectual and moral development of their subject. The relative freedom of the one tends to limit the necessity of the other until, through the discipline of experience and the growth in intellectual discernment, the parent-child relation, as we started with it, is changed into the best type of human companionship. But all this comes about through actual relationships operating in an ideal way to modify the permanent relationship on which the home is founded.<sup>1</sup>

There is (b) another class of cases which, because the differences involved are of a more radical character, and cannot be brought under the forms of the established morality, requires a separate organization if we are to make moral progress. Here we considered,

<sup>1</sup> It is hardly necessary to say that the influence works in the other direction as well. Thus, the parent-child relation in respect to the other relations prevents equality from degenerating into contempt by securing mutual respect.



as an intermediate example, the phenomena of adolescent morality. We say intermediate, because there is much here that not only requires, but is capable of readjustment under the old forms; and if, for the time, we are thrown into confusion by the breaking up of fixed habits, and the introduction of new thoughts and impulses, the opportunity should be freely and generously made for the reorganization of the permanent gains of the past which, then, may become afresh the center to which we may anchor while meeting the other problems which do not seem amenable to this method of control. When this does not take place, the individual is thrown into an extreme and lonely opposition, and because there is no permanent social organization,—as there cannot be for any transitional phenomena,—into which he may go, there arise certain fortuitous and temporary associations of which the ‘gang’ was taken as a type.<sup>1</sup> In this connection we saw that one of the chief problems of morality was so to conceive and organize the home that it may become the natural and normal field within which growing boys and girls can live through this intermediate period to the benefit of all concerned. This leads to the other example. Beyond adolescence lies the differentiated interests and activities of adult life. From the stand-point of intellectual development this means that imagination undergoes a wide extension, and, in supplying the specialized images which are the support of these differences, provides the conditions for the organization of many social groups. How this takes place may be seen if we recall that in the home the relationships are all determined by the fact of correlativity. For this reason it is impossible, for example, for the child to occupy any other place, within the family group than that which is determined for it by the coexistent parenthood of other members of the group. The child relation is not, of course, incompatible, in itself, with the parent relation, but to become consistent with it, it requires a new sphere for its legitimate exercise. The principle involved in this particular case is capable of indefinite expansion. The

<sup>1</sup> We may note in passing that when these accidental relations become fixed we have the organization of protest, and the psychological conditions of crime are already operative.

farther we get from the original center in this multiplication of group on group, the more specialized do the relations which their members sustain to one another become. The interests of one group over against those of another become more and more exclusive. The fact, therefore, is as we now know it, that the same person is at once child, parent, brother, neighbor, etc. The importance of this fact is that these existent conditions, which because they are so familiar seldom arouse inquiry, implicitly raise the problems the solution of which determines the character and extent of one's human development. From the intellectual standpoint, the problem is, how these various predicates can be made consistent within the unity of the same consciousness; from the moral point of view, it is how conduct in these several relations can be brought into the form of a reconstructive ideal, and thus serve as an implicit principle of social and ethical development.

Let us look now at the motives underlying these several transformations. With respect to the first class of cases, it was shown that because the opposition falls within the one social system,—or, as we may say, refers to the same memory-system,—the feeling-motor consciousness with which this system is connected meets with only a temporary arrest, and that the resolution of the differences takes place because it is found that the motives which give to each its distinctive support are capable of flowing together in a single stream to the permanent enrichment of life. Now when we turn to the other class, it does not seem necessary to dwell at any length on the motives which are characteristic of adolescence. It seems obvious that its motives are as changeable as its phenomena. They present some of the features of primitive morality with some of those of traditional morality. With the former they share its immediacy,—the directness with which it tends to get itself fulfilled; with the latter, they display an unreflecting obedience to what is required. We may say, therefore, that the adolescent motive is at once independent and servile. It is independent because and when it finds its sanction in the satisfactions which center in its own impulsive nature; it is servile because and when it unhesitatingly and even passionately follows the leader who,

for the time, has got the upper hand. There is an incompatibility between these two attitudes—their counterpart is found among slave populations—just as and because there is an opposition between the motive which in either case is functional. An additional complication comes in because it is never possible wholly to free the feeling-consciousness of this period from the control of the conative-affective processes through which connection with the home is maintained. This is the law of habit applied to motive, and because of its operation the broken and partial feeling processes which underlie adolescent phenomena tend always toward organization along the accustomed lines. When the social conditions of the period are favorable, this is doubtless what takes place; as much of the active feeling life as possible is assimilated to the old motive, and the old duties and relations are sustained and reinforced. The psychological conditions point in the same direction. For, to speak accurately, early adolescence has no motive. But supervening as it does upon a period of moral training, there is, as the ground tone of all its restlessness, a feeling of unsatisfactoriness, a feeling which is generated through the failure of its impulsive activity to terminate in those objective sources from which, as we have seen, the sense of moral approval arises. In other words, the motives of pre-adolescent morality tend constantly to absorb the motives by which the new forms of conduct are mediated and to bring them under regulation. In the same way as before, the motives here in question present, so far, essentially the same problem; only the problem is more complex than it was because there is a residuum which remains, and which goes to form the special motives which are required by the differentiated interests of the next period.

The chief feature of the motive up to this point is that the several conative-affective processes which have appeared are sufficiently congruous to constitute a fairly continuous and harmonious experience. Whatever variations have been noticed have not been considerable enough to be considered as forming distinctive types. They all serve the same purpose,—the purpose of all motives—namely, to maintain and develop the organization in reference to



which the actions which they prompt take place. The limit of this is reached when the maturing youth is brought, through profound and significant physiological changes, into new relations with his old associations. Then variations in conduct occur, and new forms of feeling are developed which fall outside the former limits, and which cannot be assimilated by any single organization. Hence, as we said, this last stage is characterized by a number of specialized forms of activity more or less external to each other, and corresponding to these groups, conative-feelings exist whose only relation seems to be that they more or less effectively inhibit each other. Up to a certain point—that is, so long as the development of any system of moral interests is possible,—there is both an enrichment of moral ideas and an enlargement of the moral feelings. Beyond the point where development is possible,—that is, when the original moral organization is required to incorporate material which is, or appears to be, incompatible with its present constitution,—there is not only a multiplication of systems which are external to one another, but also a grouping of corresponding motives which oppose each other. Here we have on a large scale, and with respect to many lines of activity, what we have noticed on a small scale, and with respect to a single line. These spheres of interests are cultivated simultaneously, and the individual gains, in passing from the one to the other, an expertness and flexibility which would not be possible so long as his activities fell within a single group, and the feelings by which he was moved were of a single type. This, perhaps, is the only gain. From the standpoint of moral theory, no new principles emerge; and if we leave the discussion at this point, it is because here experience begins to fail us. It is not difficult to see what the next stage must be, but until we can intellectually win our way from imagination to thought, the ethics of reason remains, where for the many it has always been, in the unacquired domain of the future.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### MORAL FREEDOM.

In this essay we have been dealing, from a genetic standpoint, with some of the more important considerations bearing upon the nature and limits of the moral life. The discussion has shown that the phenomena of morality—that is, the concrete moral behavior of men in organized societies—are phenomena of control which do not happen accidentally, and which are capable of being studied with a view to ascertaining the principles which are realized in them, and which, through them, come to more explicit and widespread application. In general, it has been shown that the standard of control which the moral life displays is best described by the term moral ideal, and provision was made for the diversity of the moral life when the facts of moral behavior were seen to work out, in their consequences, to the maintenance and development of the moral organization. It is, therefore, with the support that comes from the studies of this essay that we may point out that at every step we have been considering some aspect or other of the facts and relations which are grouped together under the moral ideal. The scope of our inquiry has included the following main lines. Some account, in the first place, was given of the moral ideal—in the chapter bearing that title—especially with a view to show its possibility, and the discussion was guided by the requirements of an answer to the question, How comes there to be a moral ideal? This prepared the way for a consideration of the moral ideal itself, not as an abstract, rationally conceived fact, but as it was able to take on concrete qualifications in the development of those moral relations to the establishment of which, we said, it was chief contributor. The question which directed the research at this point was, Why there is an ideal? and we saw that it was only from the differences

which it makes in human society that light could be thrown upon this inquiry. The specific results were summed up in the terms personal and individual, and the chapter took its title—The Moral Self—from the fact that these two specifications had an interdependence which seemed to imply a common ground, not of a mechanical, but of an ideal sort. In the succeeding chapters on the moral motive, this conception was worked out in more detail, and we saw the moral ideal producing either one or the other of the two types of moral life—the personal or the individual—which were said, in the earlier chapter, to be the consequences of its functional presence in any social organization. The definite question throughout these chapters was, How the moral ideal works out the moral results which our previous analysis had shown to be the ends which, if it were present, would necessarily ensue. In all this, then, the moral ideal has been the subject of inquiry. And, as we bring these studies to the concluding chapter, it remains the central theme. For the problem of moral freedom is concerned with the question, Why any one does the things which are prescribed by the moral ideal.<sup>1</sup>

Nowhere is it more necessary to come to terms with the historic formulations of an inquiry than in the discussion of this question. This is so not merely because 'freedom' has been largely and variously considered, but because it presents the whole moral problem in a particularly condensed form. Hence the central position which it occupies in our ethical theories; and it is the presupposi-

<sup>1</sup> It will serve to set the various stages of the argument in relation to their chief topic, and also to show the form of the genetic inquiry peculiar to each if we set down in a table what has been stated above, *in extenso*.

Chapter	Subject	Genetic Question.
III	Moral Ideal.	How comes there to be a Moral Ideal?
IV	Moral Self.	Why is there a Moral Ideal?
V	Moral Motive.	How the Moral Ideal works out to moral results?
VI		
VII		
VIII	Moral Freedom.	Why any one does what the Moral Ideal requires?



tion of the practical efforts we put forth to bring some sort of systematic unity into our moral life. The consistency of our thinking upon, and the success of our living after the pattern of, an ideal seem to concentrate in a reasoned or assumed 'freedom' which furnishes the nerve of every ethical undertaking. This is a fact of which it is impossible to remain in ignorance so long as we keep in close contact with the historic records, or are discriminating observers of contemporary moral movements. No consideration of the phenomena of morality would be adequate which failed in due recognition of the importance, for these phenomena, of what is called 'freedom.' But neither the wide recognition of freedom, nor its importance for the moral life can excuse us from inquiring into the meaning of the term, or from seeking to know what are the facts which it more precisely denotes. And this need becomes the more imperative when we consider what are the varying changes in conception which the history of morality enables us to note. From this standpoint, the problem is concerned with the nature of moral behavior. Now it is obvious that behavior, whether of the moral sort or not,<sup>1</sup> is an event which is connected, in an indefinite number of ways, with other events which give to it a contexture which contributes to, if it does not constitute, the significance which the behavior possesses. Behavior, that is, is a concrete event which implies connection with an environment, and which, apart from that environment, would not be precisely what, in that environment, it is. The problem of freedom, consequently, has necessarily taken the form of an inquiry into the relation between these two factors—behavior and environment—which are present in all moral action.

This becomes obvious the moment we attempt to state the several views which are distinguished in the history of the subject. There is, first, what has been called physical freedom. This is an assertion of the individual's adequate, if not complete, control of the physical and physiological elements through which behavior gets

<sup>1</sup> For an interesting account of the 'wide range of meaning' which attaches to the word behavior, cf. C. Lloyd Morgan's *Animal Behavior*, Chapter I

expression. Some such conception as this gives point, for example, to Kant's discussion of moral freedom, and is the subject of his discussion in the Third Antinomy.<sup>1</sup> The question is, How can man be morally free in a world of physical causation? In another form the same relation and, therefore, the same difficulty is presented by, what may be called, psychological freedom. By those who hold this view, freedom from psychical causation is asserted, as in the former view there was the denial of physical causation. What is affirmed is an arbitrary freedom of choice. This was a characteristic mediaeval doctrine of which Duns Scotus and William of Occam may be taken as representatives. It is the so-called liberty of indifference; and what we are indifferent to are the motives which an *ex post facto* examination of the behavior may bring to light. No one is an outspoken advocate of this kind of freedom at the present time, for no one denies the presence of motives as the condition of choice; and yet it is not uncommon, even now, to find it asserted that the will is free to choose between present motives, and that in every decision of the will it is not the motive which is chosen, but the free choice of the motive which is the antecedent of moral behavior. This seems, however, only a rather shamed-faced way of saying that motives have nothing at all to do with the matter. Hence the advocates of what has been called moral freedom maintain that "the freedom of the will is in the fact that the person is enlightened by reason and susceptible to rational motives, and thus is self-determining, both as self-directing and self-exerting."<sup>2</sup> This conception of freedom is said to follow from the definition of the will as "the power of a person to determine the ends to which he will direct his energies and the exercise of his powers."<sup>3</sup> Freedom, then, is the ability to do those things which are in harmony with the moral nature; or, the power to conform conduct to the requirements of present character. Finally, there is real freedom. This should not be confused with moral freedom, but is so related to it that it is the outcome of a course

<sup>1</sup> *Critique of Pure Reason*, Max Müller's translation, pp. 362-369.

<sup>2</sup> Harris, *God, Creator and Lord of All*, Vol. II, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

of moral living. It is characterized by a perfect harmony of the will with the demands of the moral ideal.

These views fall into two distinct groups. For convenience they may be distinguished by the terms negative and positive freedom. Under negative freedom are included physical and psychological freedom, and the common character which this type of theory has consists in the denial that the conditions under which human activity takes place are determinative of moral behavior. It is an assertion of freedom *from*. By positive freedom is understood the recognition that the will is under direction and control in carrying out those courses of action which receive moral valuation. Here belong the other views mentioned above. This is characteristically a freedom *to*. Now, it is an interesting observation that this classification of theories marks the point of disagreement between the two main parties to the free-will controversy—the necessarians and the libertarians. Necessarianism—or, following Mill, determinism—is a challenge of the facts on which negative freedom relies for maintaining its position. Libertarianism—or, as is sometimes said, indeterminism—is a flank movement to turn the assault of the direct attack, and to cover the movements of the advanced wing in their retreat from an untenable situation. When, therefore, we come to a statement of what freedom is, as the result of these movements and counter-movements, we find that the essential contention of necessarianism is granted, and a more precise regard is had for the conditions which are essential to the occurrence of moral behavior. Thus the freedom of the moral life is no longer thought to consist in the fact that it is beyond all law or regulation, only it is held that the source of control is to be found in the moral subject himself. Or, to use the generally accepted terminology of the schools, ‘self-determination’ is of the essence of moral freedom.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is a conclusion in which both libertarians and necessarians seem to agree. Thus, from one side we have this statement: “To be free means that one is determined by nothing but himself.” Mackenzie, *Manual of Ethics*, p. 94. From a determinist writer we take this: “The idea of liberty therefore should be reconciled with the idea of determinism; but then, it may be that of a determination by oneself opposed to that of a determination by a power outside oneself, of an internal opposed to an external causality.



In view of the divergent uses to which the term freedom has lent itself, we may not take too lightly the particular affirmations and denials of the historical theories. Especially do we need to be on our guard against those prejudices, of a scientific and philosophical sort, which, because they act insidiously, deflect the truth. For example, that easy acquiescence with which we allow ourselves to be shut up within a mechanical system of interacting forces in the name of science should be discouraged, as if the history of science were not a history of man's emancipation from and control of, the forces which made the life of our ancestors miserable and poor. Equally to be deprecated is that philosophic pride which, springing from an ignorance of man's place in the universe, permits us to go about denying all barriers and limitations, as if the history of philosophy were not the history of the chastening of man's spirit in the process of learning his kinship with all that really is. Neither position is ethically fruitful. For the fact to which our moral experience testifies is neither that the cosmos, as a system of forces operating under the principle of physical causation, is hostile to the occurrence of moral behavior, nor that the moral life is some secret and esoteric existence which somehow circumvents the obvious facts and relations of the material world. To acknowledge facts of the former kind does not make the assertion of moral freedom unintelligible, nor are we to suppose that the natural laws become suspended with the affirmation of self-determination.<sup>1</sup> The more virile ethical conception is that the moral life implies the natural, and without its support would be incapable of concrete expression. The contrary supposition is the form

The idea of a free man is that of an agent who is really an agent instead of being simply an intermediary for the transmission of movements." Duprat, *Morals: The Psycho-Sociological Basis of Ethics*, pp. 87, 88. This agreement as to the terms in which the concept of freedom should be stated does not mean that there are, therefore, no differences between libertarian and necessarian; it indicates rather the point of starting for the development of differences which become explicit with the attempt to determine the function and scope of moral freedom.

<sup>1</sup> Duprat, *Morals: The Psycho-Sociological Bases of Ethics*, p. 24.

in which dogmatic rationalism issues, in the moral realm, in an essentially vicious dualism. But we have seen how little 'reason'—as a faculty of innate practical principles—has to do with the moral life. The truth rather is that what 'reason'—in this use of the term—has divorced, we find inextricably joined together in all stages through which the moral life develops. It cannot, therefore, be a question whether freedom stands opposed to necessity—as thought to matter; but the quite different inquiry of the relation of freedom to necessity throughout the course of moral development.

The immediately available connection for the discussion of freedom may be found in the general view which we have taken of the moral motive. From this point of view moral freedom may be defined as the ability to act in conformity with the moral motive. Now there is no dispute as to the fact that men conform their conduct to the requirements of accepted standards, or that these standards operate as a measure of the life which is possible under them. Indeed, so persistent is this feature of moral behavior that, whatever view one may hold as to the origin of the ideal, no behavior is regarded as moral which does not embody a principle which is capable of indefinite application. So far Kant was right in his insistence that the moral will is implicitly legislative. But, as we have pointed out, the principle of morality is concretely embodied in social institutions through which it is not only preserved, but secures control of individuals in their progress toward the larger life. Considerable space has been devoted to showing how the common content of ideas and feelings which the moral ideal implies is made available and effective in the moral motive. Now it is the same complex of facts, only from a different side, which determines the problem before us. For freedom lays emphasis upon the dispositions which this common content begets in the form of habits of thought and action. We have already pointed out the importance for this result of inhibition—the starving out of antagonistic modes of action which endanger those selected activities which have been built into our existing moral organizations. Inhibition, thus, must be considered as a psycho-sociological phenomenon. That is to say, it expresses from the individual

side the process of selective activity through which society maintains its peculiar or characteristic type. From the individual and the social points of view, it is negative; and yet it forms an important part of that ideal control which the doctrine of the moral motive has shown to be essential to the moralization of life. Socially, it is the negative expression of the law of the whole: it is a safeguard to the inherited and acquired tradition of the group. Individually, it is a constant bar to the dissipation of energy, a negative lesson in the importance of invested capital. Taken together these two sides secure a simplification of the conditions of the moral life. The importance of this lies in the fact that the moral life presents a real difficulty on account of its great complexity. How *can* anyone enter, and fulfill the requirements of, the moral life? How *can* any one who as yet has no ideal live according to the ideal? No one can, of course, unless there is in the moral community already a clear consciousness of what is essential to its own existence, and an intelligent apprehension of the methods of its own development. And this cannot be unless the fortuitous has been distinguished from the permanent, and unless it is seen that the instruments of advance are forged anew in each generation. The important consideration, therefore, in the early stage is not so much to get the positive thing done as to prevent the hostile, or useless thing from becoming habitual. Through the actions which society makes possible to the individual, dispositions must be encouraged which, because they draft all the available energy, tend to issue in forms of conduct that are in accord with the moral ideal.

The importance of distinguishing what is permanent and what is relative in social organizations has other than moral significance. The transient, even if it is the fortuitous, is not useless because, possibly, it may have no direct ethical value. Social organizations, no doubt, become overburdened in the course of their history with an accumulation of unessentials; and this presents a serious moral menace when it is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain what the fundamental requirements are. It should be remarked, however, that the danger to morality does not lie in the fact that some things in the social order are morally indifferent; but when



indifferent things assume the same gravity as essentials the foundations of the moral order are threatened, and disintegration of the moral life is near at hand. This condition is found when social forms—organizations, laws, customs, etc.—in which the moral ideal has come to concrete expression are assimilated so closely with the ideal which they embody that they are enforced with all the sanctions which originally belonged to the ideal itself. Morality then, passes over into and becomes identified with traditionalism. For example: a large part of the moral inefficiency of the Christian Church in all its branches, Greek, Catholic, and Protestant, is directly due to its inability to distinguish, like its Master, between the letter and the spirit, an inability which issues from a fundamental unbelief in the truth, of which the entire life of Jesus is an illustration, that it is the Spirit which giveth life. The fact to which attention is directed is that the incidental has its legitimate place in social organization, but that much of what is incidental has only an indirect reference to the moral order. Here, for example, is the place and the material of 'society,' popularly so-called. Society, it is true, finds its negative limitations in the boundaries of the moral life, but it does not exist, as morality does, for maintaining and perpetuating the responsibilities of corporate action. It presents, rather, the opportunity for escape from the obligations of the moral life. Negatively stated, society may permit whatever is not prohibited by the current morality of the group. We may, therefore, look upon 'society' as the free and easy association of members of the community on the basis of what, from the moral standpoint, is unessential. Here, we are relieved from the necessity of taking ourselves and one another seriously.

From the connection of moral freedom and moral motive, it follows that we cannot approach the question of freedom with any hope of enlightenment if we separate the will from the conditions which make willing possible, or take the individual as the willing subject in isolation from the complex circumstances which make the moral life possible. There is an added reason for this in the fact that, psychologically, there is no will and no individual isolated from a group of assignable conditions. If, therefore, we are to speak of the will at all,<sup>1</sup> or are to identify freedom with the possi-

<sup>1</sup> " 'Freedom of the will' is, I think, a term which would better be abandoned by Ethics. Moral Freedom for the human Self—

bility of moral choice,<sup>1</sup> the willing and the choosing are more social than individual, and the character which they display is a common possession rather than a private virtue. Indeed, as we have seen reason to believe, the individual is a particular differentiation of the social group which displays, in unique ways, all the characteristic qualities of feeling and will and thought which belong to the parent organization. Wundt doubtless states the truth when he says: "We know man only as a social being, governed at once by an individual will and by the will of the whole; and there is no evidence to show that the latter had its origin in the former. On the contrary, the relative independence of the individual will is the result of a later evolution. As the child becomes conscious of its own will by a gradual process, and slowly develops its own personality out of an environment which at first it scarcely distinguishes from itself, so in the state of nature it is the *common feeling, thought and will that dominate*."<sup>2</sup> This truth has important

what is it in fact, and essentially, in spite of its many degrees of intensity, so to say, and its different forms of manifestation? This is the primary ethical question."—Ladd, *Philosophy of Conduct*, p. 144.

<sup>1</sup> By moral choice we mean the choice of that on account of which we put forth effort. The following from the 'Gorgias,' 467, may serve as an illustration, and, at the same time, as an indication of the Platonic position:

*Socrates:* Do men appear to you to will that which they do, or do they will that further object for the sake of which they do that which they do;—for example, when they take medicine at the bidding of a physician, do they will the drinking of the medicine, or the health for the sake of which they drink?

*Polus:* Clearly the health.

*Socrates:* And when men go on a voyage . . . they will to have the wealth for the sake of which they go on a voyage.

*Polus:* Certainly.

*Socrates:* And is it not universally true? If a man does something for the sake of something else, he wills not that which he does, but that for the sake of which he does it.

<sup>2</sup> *The Principles of Morality*, pp. 26, 27. Italics ours.

ethical application. For if we speak of freedom as an attribute of the moral life, and if we identify freedom with the fact of moral choice, these terms are quite misleading when taken independently of their social meaning. It is, consequently, no unimportant part of the truth to affirm that freedom is an attribute of the moral community which chooses, and determines, and lays the plan of the future for every one of its members.

From the standpoint of the community, we can readily see why the individual seems to play so inconspicuous a part in determining the ends of moral action. That does not seem to be, and perhaps it is not except under special conditions, his appropriate mission. The fact which is most easily verified by an appeal to life is that for the greater part of his time he is 'under orders.' He is engaged in doing the things which the moral organization which takes account of his actions makes imperative. He behaves in characteristic ways because he must. This is to say that the causation of morality is to be found not in the individual agent—or not in him by virtue of what differentiates him from the community—but in the psycho-sociological forces which, having their seat in the moral community, operate in the individual to effect results which, alone, he could not so much as dream of. On the other hand, the moral aims of society could find no means of expression apart from the moral individual. But, as we have seen, it is the business of society to fashion the instruments by which it may make effective its morally conceived aims. And if we insist upon opposing the individual to society, we are forced to admit that it is only by doing moral things that the individual becomes moral. There is some justification for this presentation of the problem in the fact that everyday observation presents an indefinite number of instances of non-moral individuals who, under the restraints of custom, are constantly doing those things with which the well-being of society is identified. The reason for this is that psychophysically, the individual is himself a psycho-genetically developed instrument which, if it is to operate at all, must operate under the conditions, and for the ends which determined its genesis and development. On this view, morality is the immanent idea of the



individual; it is the principle under which he has been fashioned, and which, through all the growth of moral life, gets wider and more complete exemplification. Therefore we may look upon the individual as a joint cause with the moral community in its realization of the moral ideal. The causation of the moral life that is, is never a *vis a tergo*; it is a conjoint operation of the essential elements of the situation which is awaiting determination. Hence, it is pertinent to remark that to find the explanation of moral behavior in the strongest motive, whatever view one may take of the 'strongest,' does not meet the demands of the problem of freedom. The strongest motive never determines the resulting behavior, because morality implies a complex of motives which sum up all that is pertinent to the issue. But when the individual is reckoned among the causes of moral action, it should not be forgotten that the individual needs that determination and direction which society affords if what he does is to issue in the freedom of a moral organization.

The conclusion, therefore, at which we arrive, is that there is no warrant in a study of the moral facts for predicating freedom as the positive and exclusive attribute of the individual agent. This is true equally of primitive and advanced peoples. The child of Western civilization is, in this regard, on a level with the child of savage origin. Here, then, there is little, except perhaps in the emphasis which is given to the contributing factors, to distinguish the problem of freedom from the problem of motive. Indeed, so intimately connected at bottom are they that Green held that the question of freedom is the question of the origin of motives.<sup>1</sup> It is perhaps not so much a difference in doctrine, as a difference due to our method of approach to the moral problem, that we prefer to state the relation in converse order. It would then appear that the question of motive is the question of the origin of freedom. We should not say, as would Green, that the individual acts under motives—that is, under the idea of personal good—because he is free; but the empirical fact seems to be that he becomes free as the result of acting under motives. Freedom, consequently, is condi-

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 100.

tioned upon the formation of habits of coöperative activity. How little of indeterminism there is in moral freedom, from this point of view, is obvious; for the fact, which the study of moral motive has prepared the recognition, is that habits are mechanized forms of reaction to permanent and constantly recurring situations. If, however, we recall the later developments of moral motive as pointing the way toward a larger and more spontaneous freedom, the truth is, to adopt the words of another, "that moral freedom must be considered as a matter admitting of degrees, and as itself capable of development. In a word, human beings are not born free morally; neither do all men possess at any time, nor does any individual man possess at all times, equal degrees of moral freedom. The rather has such freedom to be spoken of as an acquisition, dependent upon repeated exercise of so-called power of choice, under the principle of habit. Growth in moral freedom is the development of the self's capacity for making choices."<sup>1</sup>

We now turn to consider the question of moral freedom as an attribute of the moral individual. No success in this task commensurate with its importance or the demands of truth may be looked for, however, if we remain unmindful of the positions already secured. Let it, therefore, be said that we are not concerned to maintain a freedom of unregulated behavior; nor does there seem any reason why the sources of control should not be acknowledged to lie in that complex of psycho-sociological conditions which constitute the motive of human conduct. If the argument of this essay has led anywhere, it should place this conclusion beyond dispute. Hence we need only to add that, in carrying the discussion beyond the limits of the foregoing chapters, we are not changing foundations, nor do we doubt that the principles which have emerged in the course of this inquiry are adequate when the freest kind of freedom—freedom in its most complete development—is under consideration. What we mean to assert is that freedom cannot profitably be opposed to necessity in a disjunctive relation, nor can these terms be distinguished altogether in respect of the

<sup>1</sup> Ladd, *Philosophy of Conduct*, p. 143. Cf. Paulsen, *A System of Ethics*, p. 469.

kind of control which they respectively imply. As we have already indicated, freedom and necessity are terms which indicate a complex situation, and they depend upon the emphasis which parts of this complex receive in our approach to the moral experience which each of them implies. Thus the necessity of certain forms of conduct is beyond question. This is a matter of everyday experience. There is a moral coercion against which no amount of so-called 'freedom' is of any avail. The whole of society conspires in the individual to make any other course impossible. Any case of social contagion will illustrate the principles which we now have in mind.<sup>1</sup> But we are not limited to such instances. The common groundwork of every ethical organization is also of this nature. Whether, therefore, we consider the traditional morality of the group, or the re-arrangement of social forces which are induced by a new social consciousness of what the moral ideal implies, whether, that is, we have a case which falls under the principle of habit, or one which exemplifies the compelling power of a strong and widespread emotion, there is illustrated in the experience of the individual, in characteristic ways, what can be described only as a moral compulsion; and it would be as reasonable to speak of a person's ability to stop in mid-career down a steep incline, as to speak of the person's ability to arrest the momentum of the moral forces which are at the heart of these types of conduct.

There are certain objections to this restatement of position, which, doubtless, will suggest themselves. For example, it may be said, with respect to the body of traditional morality, that because this is now accepted as common practice, it does not follow that it was always so. There is no intention to deny that we learn to do more perfectly, and even automatically, a large number of things; only, it will be held, this improvement in the facility of the doing argues a time when these things were arduously performed, and had to be consciously chosen. In this view, the ease with which a thing is done is a sign of its necessity, as the difficulty of a given action is an index of its 'free' performance. This connection between freedom and hardship appears constantly in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Baldwin, *Social and Ethical Interpretations*, pp. 142-144, and the references which will be found there.



ethical writers, and James has preached an admirable sermon on the importance of the little hardships which a man may freely undertake for their moral value.<sup>1</sup> This view has received its most characteristic expression in the definition of conduct as 'action in the line of the greatest resistance.' Now, whether this is so or not, we may say that if it is so, morality and inexperience are synchronous facts, and that, on this basis, the most efficient individual would prove to be the least moral among men. From this point of view, also, we should be justified in giving the children of our homes as hard a time as possible for their moral good. But further, we should be under obligation so to organize the social forces outside the home that, from manhood and womanhood down to old age, one hardship is added to another until even dying cannot get itself accomplished without pain. Now, it is obvious that the only escape from the immoral consequences of such a view is to provide a way of escape from the moral life itself. And this is practically what the theory does. For when freedom is claimed as giving moral quality to acts of conduct in which the individual's choice is an ultimate determinant, freedom is referred to unregulated, as necessity is to regulated behavior. But since the latter has been won from, and, with the advancement of the individual in moral culture, is constantly encroaching upon the former, freedom becomes less and necessity more, not only in the extent of their domains, but in their significance for human advancement. Thus, instead of the progressive moralization of life consisting in the attainment of a larger freedom, it consists in its progressive loss to such an extent that necessity on this view, is, always and necessarily, a lapsed freedom.<sup>2</sup> Hence the more perfectly we learn to do those things which put us into coöperative relations with our fellows, that is, the more efficient we become, the less moral are we because, without forethought and without strain, habit has become with us a second nature.

If, now, we seek to avoid the consequences of this view, another type of theory is brought to attention. This will agree that habit has, rightfully, a large place in moral development, and that it is important to get the fundamental moral requirements mechanized so completely that they are beyond revision. And it may be urged that to do this most economically requires that the individual start life without such freedom as the first view demands.

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the explanation of instinct as lapsed intelligence, e. g., by Wundt, Romanes, Lewes, etc.

But, it will be argued, there are conditions under which habit provides no clue to appropriate behavior, and what is to be done must be left to the individual's decision. Now, this is a more plausible theory because it remains nearer the facts of experience, and seeks to provide for the complexity which the moral life displays. But in this form it cannot be accepted because it does not tell us what freedom is, and leaves it without anchorage in the totality of the facts which constitute the moral life. Freedom in this view, is an addendum to the normal human life, and morality appears as a sporadic, not a permanent, requirement of human organization.

In contrast to both these views, we are required, by our standpoint, to ascertain the essential characteristics of morality in all the forms which the moral life assumes, and if the earliest and most elementary forms are those which emphasize the necessity under which the individual is to conform his conduct to already fixed types, we must find here the key to our interpretation of whatever it is that goes by the name of freedom. There is no freedom, therefore, which is not the very heart of necessity, and no necessity which does not constitute the very being of freedom.

The attempt has sometimes been made to determine the boundaries of freedom and necessity by reference to the kind of control which each implies. Thus by one writer "*moral* freedom" is identified with "such a kind and amount of self-control as belongs, both in fact and in accordance with the demands of a sound ethical theory, to man's moral life and moral development."<sup>1</sup> Necessity would then mean the determination of individual behavior under principles which have their origin outside that self which is essential, both in fact and in theory, for the establishment of moral freedom. Necessity, from this standpoint, must be identified with social control. How much of truth there is in this way of stating the problem will appear as we proceed. Whether it accords with the most elementary moral facts of which we have knowledge may at once be questioned. Moreover, it involves a false separation between the self and the conditions under which the self develops; and in contrasting the one with the other we are led to suppose that the principle of moral organization is to be identified, *in toto*,

<sup>1</sup> Ladd, *Philosophy of Conduct*, p. 133.

with the individual, and that the *socius*, if it enter into the account at all, does so merely as the foil—a sort of negative possibility—of the moral life. In view of the positions already taken, this separation of the individual from society and of society from the individual is a quite unwarranted abstraction. And if we are to remain in accord with our own foregoing conclusions, the contrast between freedom and necessity must be looked for, not in the separated halves of the moral life, but in all the stages through which, in their inseparable relationship, society and the individual make advancement in moral culture. For the fact which will receive increasing emphasis as we proceed is that self-control and social-control are two forms which ideal-control assumes in the historic development of the moral life. Now one and now the other, both in theory and in fact, takes the lead, but neither attains to a position which would warrant us in regarding it as an independent source of moral guidance.

The conditions under which freedom becomes a pressing problem, practically and theoretically, have been indicated in the chapters on motive. We saw that a development in motive is required whenever conventional morality fails to provide for all the awakening interests of the moral subject. Whenever we grow beyond our own moral past, or develop interests which are not possible of assimilation by the standard motive of our group, a moral situation is instituted which, through its tensional character, is characterized by the changes of emphasis among the factors of which the situation is composed. We saw how important it was for the motive to be capable of expansion and adaptation to changing conditions. Now the fact which freedom emphasizes is that the expansion and adaptation of the motive involves an essentially new and unique apprehension and conception of the moral life. For however true it is that with the increase in number and complexity of our social relations the moral motive is under pressure to develop to the full its own internal meanings, the whole significance of the process is not exhausted until it is seen that in this process prominence is given to the hitherto unaccentuated conative factor which, from the time of its first recognition, grows more



and more in importance until it becomes the dominant element in all future growth. Morality, that is to say, is no longer an affair in which the individual is learning to appropriate his moral inheritance through adapting himself to common modes of behavior, but it is becoming increasingly a matter of an enlarging and deepening consciousness of ability on the part of the individual to effect results in the social world which are of importance to himself and others. In other words, the moral motive is not merely developing further meaning; it is undergoing transformation of a very profound kind. In becoming centralized in the individual it passes beyond its own traditional past, and makes of the individual a unique moral force.

Now it is the recognition of this fact that opens the way from the deadlock in which our study of the moral motive issued. The study of morality from the standpoint of its motive confines inquiry to ascertaining what are the principles of organization which have appeared in the development of the moral life. It is essentially a study of the moral life *von unten*. Hence we were left in the last chapter not so much with a picture, as a bird's-eye view, of the moral life. The morality of the modern man, we saw, is decidedly cosmopolitan. The moral ideal is applied to many and diverse interests, and it settles down to a system of control, through which individuals are bound together, within each of these interests, by the ties of loyalty. All, therefore, that can be said from the standpoint of the moral subject is that he is conscious of loyalty to a number of laws which have their basis in as many ideas; it is farthest from his experience to have codified these laws, or to have grouped the ideas under a comprehensive and dominating ideal. But, as was pointed out, this is the next step that the moral facts imply; and it is to this end that moral freedom leads.

We intimated just now that the most elementary form of moral freedom is the consciousness of ability to effect results which are of social consequence. This is prefigured in the general character of conscious life in which every experience pushes out beyond itself and passes into other, and related, experiences. It is, however, only prefigured. For, as we have shown, it is characteristic of the moral experience to find in the *consequences* of its own acts the

principle of its own movement, and this is not possible until desire is brought under the control of socially approved ends. To state it in another way, desire must be rationalized if it is to develop into a moral will. But there is no moralization which does not imply control by the ideal of which ethics takes account. Hence the moral will, in this point of view, is desire directed toward those forms of behavior which, both as means and consequents, tend to realize the moral ideal in our concrete social relationships. Or, as Paulsen writes, "Will in the narrower sense, or rational will, is desire determined by purposes, principles, and ideals."<sup>1</sup> Now, there are two types of such will which are dominated by the personal and individual types of social organization. In the first we have a rationalized will working under social control effectively realizing in many and diverse circumstances the full measure of good of which they are capable. Here desire—the primitive conative-affective consciousness—is, in Paulsen's phrase, 'determined by purposes, principles, and ideals.' Only, we have to remark, the 'purposes, principles, and ideals' are not, as such, imminent to the will through which they are carried into effect. From the standpoint of the individual, this means that he is acting under necessity. He is acting morally, of course, since what he does concretely realizes what the moral ideal requires; but he is not acting freely. Freedom belongs to the other, the social, end of the relation which is here implied. But since the individual cannot be taken apart from society, freedom and necessity are both essential to the moral relation; freedom no more constitutes an action moral than necessity takes it outside that category.

The other case is yet to be determined. However for the sake of emphasis we may state it at this point. But no consideration of further cases is required to make clear the essential nature of moral freedom. Moral freedom consists in the ability to control the social situation in such a way that effective expression is given to the ideal under which the moral life is at the time proceeding. Now, the question with which we are principally concerned is the form which the ideal assumes in order to fulfill its proper function.

<sup>1</sup> *A System of Ethics*, p. 220.

The answer to this question is, of course, that it must be either a social convention or a thought. When it is the former, we have the first case referred to above: custom is controlling the individual in the interests of the established order; when it is the latter, we have the second case: the individual is controlling society and modifying custom for the sake of realizing an ideal which is thought as a larger common good. In the first case, whatever the motives may be for the individual's actions, he is acting necessarily; in the second case, because the motives make a direct reference to the ideal and are generated by it, he is acting freely. It may be well to point out in this connection that the difficulty of that aspect of the problem of freedom with which we are now dealing is not ethical at all; it is the difficulty of giving a psychogenetic account of the process of thought.

Now if we are ever to speak of the individual as free, it must be because and when the process through which moral results are achieved is determined by the presence in consciousness of an ideal which is antecedent to and independent of the conditions of its actualization. This we have indicated in the phrase 'consciousness of ability.' Consciousness of ability is the conative aspect of what, on the intellectual side, we may call projective imagination. Both are forms in which consciousness brings the future under the control of the present and makes them continuous. Without such continuity, the future would remain unknown and uncontrolled.<sup>1</sup> That this is true of the natural world, the development of modern science is a sufficient ground for affirming. That it is true of the social world, it is the business of scientific ethics to maintain. For the moral life, like the physical universe, is one and continuous, and what we need as a basis of prediction in ethics is not an empirical knowledge of all existing cases, but of a crucial instance, that is, one in which the principle of development is clearly and adequately discerned. Now, what we have been arguing is that the principle of becoming in morality is the moral ideal; and this, as we have indicated, always shows itself in the moral agent as an ability to determine the consequences which will follow from

<sup>1</sup> For the working out of the logical relations of knowledge and control, Cf. Baldwin, *Thought and Things*, vol. ii, chapter xiii and xiv.



his conduct. We cannot, therefore, confine morality to the time at which it takes place: it always and by its very nature passes over into the future to relieve it of that uncertainty and vagueness which acts as an opiate on moral endeavors. The future belongs to morality, not figuratively but literally, because it is the characteristic of all that is good to realize itself in the undetermined circumstances of the future. This projection of the moral life comes to be the nucleus around which the transformation of society takes place.

Now, the particular features of this movement come into view when we recall the fact that it is the nature of experience, and therefore of the moral experience, to leave traces, or to generate dispositions, which make possible the recurrence of the types of behavior required by moral organization. We have seen to what extent this is dependent upon the intellectual life. Suggestion, imitation, imagination have been mentioned as securing that coöperation between the individual and his social environment out of which morality grows. There seems to be increasing clearness in ideational distinctness; and the greater the progress the more dependent does the moral motive appear to be upon intellectual apprehension of the termini of approved forms of conduct. Now advance beyond the stage at which imagination is the chief guide must wait until the volitional factors which are present in the earlier stages of moral growth connect with the imagination—a conjunction which is psychically important in so far as it makes the development of imagination possible and renders it independent of the concrete image to which it is bound in all the earlier forms.<sup>1</sup> More than this, however, transpires. For if through its connection with conation, imagination loses its hold upon the concrete social copy, and comes to accentuate and make possible the expression of the conative-affective impulses of the moral subject, it is also true that this reacts upon previously developed motives which then condition forms of activity which have all the essential features of moral freedom. The passage from necessity to freedom

<sup>1</sup> For the relation of the cognitive and voluntary processes, cf., Külpe, *Outlines of Psychology*, pp. 443 f.

is dependent, intellectually, upon the possibility of substituting ideas for images,—a possibility which is dependent upon the function which conation comes to have in the moral experience of the individual. As it is through the prominence of the conative factors, at the level of imagination, that the image is transformed into the idea, so we may say that, at the same time and by the same means, a new organization of the feeling life takes place whereby it secures a larger field and a higher range. In some such way as this we may suppose that the end and the motives of conduct become conjoint factors in the moral life of the individual and give rise to that consciousness of ability which, we said, is the equivalent of moral freedom. The individual, in other words, has outgrown, intellectually and morally, his historic inheritance, and become a factor in the intellectual and moral development of the race.

We have spoken of the change in the character of the motive which accompanies the emergence in the individual of moral freedom. The facts at first glance are somewhat paradoxical, and yet they may be expressed, without too great a strain, by saying that with the removal of social compulsion, the more imperatively does the individual hold himself and others to the performance of those acts in which the moral ideal is realized. In other words, the consciousness of moral efficiency begets its appropriate motives. This is usually spoken of as the feeling of obligation. It is the constraint the morally free individual feels himself to be under to realize as best he can, the objects to which the motive points. This should be distinguished from the feeling of responsibility which is connected with the character of the means by which the ends of the moral life are sought to be realized. The feeling of obligation is the more general, and it attaches to all forms of moral freedom. It is usually expressed by the dictum: 'I ought, therefore I can.' In the light of the considerations we have been urging, it would appear to be equally true that 'I can, therefore I ought.' However, neither statement alone is adequate because no account is taken of the concrete particulars which determine the applicability of either. Ought I to do everything I can morally do? If not, neither moral freedom, nor the feeling of obligation which goes along with it, can be the final solvent of the moral situation. What Paulhan expresses as a general psychological fact may be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to this ethical problem, namely, that "Every idea . . . every sen-

timent; in brief, every psychic system tends to complete itself by volitions and motor phenomena; every system has its own will."<sup>1</sup> That is, the moral idea tends to work itself out in practical forms of activity under guidance of the feeling of obligation. The feeling reinforces the idea, and the successful carrying out of the idea reacts upon the feeling. But whether what is done is the best thing to be done, whether this most adequately realizes the idea, neither moral freedom nor the feeling of obligation as such determines. What I must do if I am to do what I ought to do is a matter which can be decided only if I have regard for the conditions under which I am called upon to act. Thus, the feeling of obligation is as general as the end at which I aim, but the feeling of responsibility is as concrete as are the particular acts which are determined by the psycho-sociological conditions under which, in the given case, the end must find its realization. This distinction holds good throughout, even in those cases where we have to acknowledge a feeling of responsibility for the ends toward which subsequent effort is directed. There is in all such instances a direct or implied reference to alternative plans between which we are required to choose, so that if choice were not itself a kind of action, the basis of choice must be the relation of the possible courses as they further or hinder the moral ideals in process of fulfillment. That is to say, we feel responsible for the choice of ends in so far as they imply concrete behavior which harmonizes with types of conduct which have become established in the individual's moral experience. When, however, the decision has been made, even though it be a mistaken one, we feel under obligation to carry it out.

The development of the concept of individuality in the earlier chapters has shown this concept to be connected with the ideal elements in our social morality. Individuality, we saw, indicates the direction in which the moral community is to grow. To this may now be added that moral freedom working in the moral individual secures the release of the moral ideal from the limitations under which it must always remain so long as it is unable to get a formulation independent of its concrete embodiment in the moral community. In our study, the moral ideal has, no doubt, seemed to lag behind rather than to lead the way to moral achievement.

<sup>1</sup> *L'Activité Mentale*, p. 59 f.



This is, in part, true, and it is true because, as was indicated in the earlier pages, the moral ideal has a fundamental relation to historic morality through which it acts as a conservative, as well as a developing, principle of the moral life. It is a fact to which attention has been called, and which comparative ethics in its own way emphasizes, that what the ideal of morality is may be ascertained by an appeal to its historic embodiment in the moral practice of the race. And that there is a progressive unfolding—a development—of the moral ideal may perhaps be affirmed as the result of such inquiries. It is, however, the unique feature of genetic ethics to be able to point out that, with the presence of the morally free individual, the moral ideal gets a formulation which is not confined to the limitations of historic morality, and that, through him, it is brought to bear upon social life in such a way that the pathway is broken to the largest moral good.

To see how this is, we may recall that individuality has been shown to be a method of reorganizing experience. It expresses the right to rearrange the elements of a given situation in such a way that room is made for the incorporation of other, actual or possible, elements. From this standpoint, it is obvious that the question of moral freedom is the question of the further development of this type of experience. More particularly, the inquiry is forced upon us whether, when it is no longer a question of assimilating one moral group to another, we can go ahead of all existing groups and develop our moral ideal into a working principle for the further guidance of moral behavior. The answer to this question has been indicated in part. We said that moral freedom is conditioned by the presence of ideas, and the consequent freeing of the motives to conduct from social control. The morally free individual is unique in the sense that he lives not in the past to which historic morality is confined and which is mediated through imagination, but in the future which he determines according to a consciously conceived plan, that is, through thought. Now, thought is always projective.<sup>1</sup> It defines a situation which is, actually or possibly,

<sup>1</sup> "Mais inversement la Rationalité est essentiellement sociale, non parce que la Raison *émane* de la société, mais beaucoup plutôt parce qu' elle y tend."—Belot, *Études de Morale Positive*, p. 181.

common.' Where we are dealing, as in ethics, with relations, among individuals, this means that thought has for its object a social situation. In thought are expressed not only the position and influence which the members of the *socius* severally have; but thought reaches a formulation of the individual and personal relations that is intended to bring them into the unity of a system which secures to each its proper field and which presents them as mutually supporting and conditioning factors of the largest freedom. Thought, that is to say, is synthetic, and it tends constantly to become a self-thought. The particular kind of unity which, in ethics, thought aims to reach is the unity of a self. Now, thought cannot attain this goal by a *tour de force*, but only as it gathers its material from the experience in which the unity of a self has been achieved. In other words, we do not first of all think self, and then become a self. Rather, it is by becoming a self that any one can state or realize what the term connotes. If this is true, it falls in line with all that we have said above that the self is a gradual evolution, and the steps we take toward it are marked by the successful harmonizing of the differences which arise in the practical situations of life. We have seen, for example, that mental faculty is developed as the situations in which we are called to act are more complex. The same is consequently true of thought: it is the product of experience, and the instrument for the regulation of experience. Only in the case of thought we have to say that it defines a content which holds the competing or opposed elements of which it is composed in subordination to the larger whole within which, intentionally, each reaches its highest development and greatest security. Thought does not create nor does it destroy the differences with which it deals; it formulates a conception which is typical of the way in which all such differences in the future may be overcome. This, then, is what is meant by a self: it is a concept which thought constructs on the basis of experience, and it signifies, as it refers to the past or applies to the future, that actual or possible harmony of the individual and personal relations which are present in all social organizations. I am a self only as what is individual to me has received adjustment to what is personal and common.

The self never is, and never can be, anything but a social concept.

It is obvious, therefore, that in the case of the moral self we are dealing with that form of reconciliation of the opposing social forces—the personal and the individual—which is made possible by the moral ideal. We may say that the moral ideal is an ideal of a moral self in so far as it secures prospectively the harmony of relations in which the well-being of society consists. From this standpoint we can see that when the moral ideal becomes, in Hume's phrase, a 'party' to our moral concerns, a shifting of the relations between the factors of the moral *status* takes place. It is doubtless true that the moral ideal can get introduced as a working ideal into our social concerns only as it is thought by the individual. But it is also true that it never is thought within the limits of the individual's private experience. To think the ideal in a final and complete way is to think beyond all actual experience. The ideal is, as Kant insists, a formulation, in advance of experience, of what it is best that experience shall realize. The ideal is a *socius* to which we must now become reconciled, and within which we must now seek to realize our highest good. It is a society beyond any existing community, one that includes the principles of control for all individual and personal moral effort. By such a moral ideal the individual is freed from the tyranny of social convention, and society is freed from the misguidance of merely individual impulses. Groups of men, as well as individual men, find the highest life when they live not in the favor of one another, but in that freedom from external restraint which is secured by the moral ideal. The moral ideal is the center and source of moral autonomy. Thus, to maintain under the changing circumstances of finite existence such relations with the moral ideal as lead to the constant realization of the life which the ideal itself embodies—that it is to be free. To be free is to be, at this time and in this place, a moral self.





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